

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

Dn44.2.3
A

Harvard College
Library



THE GIFT OF

CHARLES HALL GRANDGENT

CLASS OF 1883

PROFESSOR OF ROMANCE LANGUAGES
EMERITUS

THE DIVINE COMEDY

LA COMEDIA DI DANTE ALIGHIERI

THE DIVINE COMEDY

TRANSLATED BY
HENRY JOHNSON



NEW HAVEN: YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON: HUMPHREY MILFORD
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
MDCCCCXVI

Dr 44. 2.3
A

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY
GIFT OF
CHARLES LEE GRAVEGENT
JANUARY 14, 1933

COPYRIGHT, 1915
BY
YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Printed from type, February, 1915. 750 copies
Second printing, January, 1916, 1000 copies

V

Great Singer of the waking soul immortal,
Great Poet, fearless in the depths of being,
Great Lover, who in life hast passed death's portal,
I follow after, in thy clear light seeing
The flashings greet thee in the abyss of thunder;
Below us now the last, faint cloudlet fleeing
As thou beholdest Her in heavenly wonder;
Light upon light beyond the bounds of story,
Thy powers to bear no more, bursting asunder
Nearing the presence of transcending Glory.

PREFACE

The purpose of the present translator has been to render the poem of Dante into modern English, line-for-line. A preface which should attempt to state his complete obligations would look like a bibliography, and would certainly be unsatisfactory in one phase, namely, in the expression of just feelings. Long study of some books which never disappoint, such as Toynbee's Dante Dictionary and Charles Eliot Norton's prose translation of the Divine Comedy, makes a mere mention of their titles almost a personal neglect. One would also gladly record his gratitude for pleasure and profit from writings that help genially and with an ample, scholarly generosity, such as the commentary of Benvenuto da Imola in its original form or as expounded in the valuable Vernon Readings. In view of the essential inadequacy of any enumeration of books used such a listing has not been attempted.

Since a metrical translation is a work of art as well as a work of science, the translator must avoid, when he is at his task, consultation of previous poetical solutions of the problem. Given the Italian text and sound commentaries, it has seemed merely honorable to rely solely on one's control of the English medium, unaided. That the result should prove the same as another's in very many cases has not caused discouragement. Translation of the Divine Comedy is progressive, yet the time seems not yet come for a variorum, composite version. The English language has after long literary use become sufficiently clarified to furnish the verbal and rhythmical means of embodying any

thought. Experiments in imitating foreign excellences have their own interest; yet criticism rejoices that the day of mock-Miltonic lines or like solecisms is past.

Purity in rendering is now so highly esteemed that the intrusion of an explanation into a text is intellectually resented. Only Dante could tell what he would change if he were engaged on the Comedy today. As Dante is a very great poet, every quality of his style demands consideration; his choice of words and of their place in sentence and in line can not be deemed fortuitous. His firmness of phrase is that of a living organism, and not of a crystal. The beauty and strength of the Italian language and the charm of rhyme as used by the poet are not to be enjoyed completely by those to whom the idiom is not native. An English translator of the Divine Comedy has at his command, even if he were perfectly in control of his medium, only the strength and beauty of his own language; his results can be at best an English re-expression of his original, and with such rhythmical qualities as are pleasing to the English ear. Good workmanship asks the favor of no poetical or other license, but claims the privilege of occasional expression of a necessary connoted value, for example, of a "then" or "there," or the use of an ellipsis when the Italian poet has worked thus economically.

It is a fact, perhaps not too obvious to mention, that a translator of the Divine Comedy must receive his first impulse from within, and must continue to the end in a kind of solitude, looking to a reward that is ideal. His object is to attain, without sparing himself conscientious endeavor, a faithful result. His courage is his own, and he values above price the personal help which he receives from friends as unpractical as himself. The present translator's indebtedness is great to the corporation of his college for their indulgence, which has rendered possible the making of

this by-product since its inception in 1892, and to the Bowdoin library that has generously supplemented his own working collection by the purchase, especially, of the reprints of the editions of the early commentaries. His debt of gratitude to three friends who have gone over the proofs of the translation can not be adequately stated in a few words. Professor Kenneth McKenzie of Yale University has given the translator the benefit of invaluable critical observations, of a scholarly and literary excellence that it would be impertinent to praise. To Dean Kenneth C. M. Sills and Professor Frederic W. Brown, colleagues of the translator, his obligation is intimate and of wide scope for helpfulness in discussion of every factor of his work; their unstinting and self-sacrificing willingness at all times and the contribution of both when aid was needed leave the maker of this book forever in their debt.

It has seemed well to put in an appendix rather than in footnotes translations of the Latin which Dante employed in the original text. The other non-Italian lines, the Provençal passage, Purg. XXVI. 140-147, have been translated at their place in the text.

Bowdoin College,
February 1, 1915.

CONTENTS

INFERNO

CANTO I

Introductory—The Forest—The Mountain—The Three Beasts—Virgil 1

CANTO II

Dante's Doubt—The Three Heavenly Ladies—Dante Reassured 5

CANTO III

The Gate of Hell—The Vestibule—Punishment of the Lukewarm—The Acheron—Charon—The Earthquake—Dante's Swoon 9

CANTO IV

First Circle of Inferno—Limbo, Abode of the Virtuous Heathen—Homer—The Noble Castle—Great Personages of History and Scholars of Antiquity 13

CANTO V

Second Circle—Upper Inferno—Punishment of Sins of Incontinence—Minos—The First Landslide—Punishment of the Lustful—The Infernal Gate—Semiramis, Dido, Cleopatra—Paolo and Francesca 18

CANTO VI

Third Circle—Cerberus—Punishment of the Gluttonous—The Filthy Rain—Ciacco—He foretells the fortunes of the Blacks and Whites in Florence 22

CANTO VII

Fourth Circle—Plutus—Punishment of the Avaricious and the Prodigal—The Endless Stone-rolling—Fortune—Descent to the Fifth Circle—The Stygian Marsh—Punishment of the Wrathful 26

CANTO VIII

Fifth Circle—Phlegyas—Filippo Argenti—The City of Dis—Lower Inferno—Punishment of Sins of Violence—Entrance of Virgil and Dante to Dis opposed by the Evil Spirits 30

CANTO IX

Virgil tells Dante of a previous Visit to Lower Inferno—Appearance of the Three Furies and Medusa—The coming of the Angel who opens the Gate of Dis—Sixth Circle—Punishment of Heretics—The Burning Tombs . 34

CANTO X

Sixth Circle—Farinata degli Uberti—Cavalcante de' Cavalcanti—Farinata foretells Dante's continued Exile—The Damned without Knowledge of the Present . . . 38

CANTO XI

Sixth Circle—Pope Anastatius II.—Classification of the Sins punished in Lower Inferno—Three classes of Violence, in Three Rings of the Seventh Circle—Two kinds of Fraud—Ten classes of ordinary Fraud, in the Ten Bolge of the Eighth Circle—Treachery, in the Ninth and last Circle—The less heinous Sins of Incontinence, outside Lower Inferno—Virgil explains the nature of Usury . . 42

CANTO XII

Seventh Circle, First Ring—Punishment of the Sin of Violence against one's Neighbor—The Minotaur—The Second Landslide—The River of Blood—The Centaurs, Chiron, Nessus—Tyrants, Dionysius—Murderers, Guy de Montfort, Attila, Pyrrhus 45

CANTO XIII

Seventh Circle, Second Ring—Punishment of the Sin of Violence against Oneself—The Forest of Suicides—Pier delle Vigne—The Squanderers—The Black Hounds . 49

CANTO XIV

Seventh Circle, Third Ring—Punishment of the Sin of Violence against God—The Sandy Plain and the Rain of Fire—Capaneus—Phlegethon—The Source of the Rivers of Inferno—The Statue in Crete 54

CANTO XV

Seventh Circle, Third Ring—Violence against Nature, Sodomy—Brunetto Latini—His bitter Denunciation of the Florentines—He foretells Dante's Suffering at their hands . 58

CANTO XVI

Seventh Circle, Third Ring—Other Sodomites—Three Florentines—Dante explains the Degeneracy of Florence—Approach to the Descent into the Eighth Circle—Dante's Girdle—First Glimpse of Geryon 62

CANTO XVII

Seventh Circle, Third Ring—The Third kind of Violence against God, Usury—Description of Geryon—Descent on Geryon's Back to the Eighth Circle 66

CANTO XVIII

Eighth Circle—Punishment of the Fraudulent, scourged by Horned Demons—Malebolge—First Bolgia—Panders and Seducers—Jason—Second Bolgia—Flatterers—The Ditch of Filth 70

CANTO XIX

Eighth Circle—Third Bolgia—Simonists—The Sinners, head downwards and with their feet burning—Reference to Dante's Breaking of the Font in the Baptistery—Descent into the Bolgia—Pope Nicholas III.—Dante inveighs against the Greed of the Popes 74

CANTO XX

Eighth Circle—Fourth Bolgia—Soothsayers—The Sinners, with heads twisted, look constantly backward—Manto—Virgil relates the Founding of Mantua 78

CANTO XXI

Eighth Circle—Fifth Bolgia—Barrators—The Sinners immersed in boiling Pitch—Reference to the Arsenal at Venice—Malebranche—The next Bridge shattered when Christ descended into Hell 82

CANTO XXII

Eighth Circle—Fifth Bolgia—A Barrator tricks the Devils and escapes their Hooks—Two Devils in Pursuit fight and fall into the Pitch 86

CANTO XXIII

Eighth Circle—Virgil with Dante in his arms escapes from the Devils by sliding down the Embankment to the Sixth Bolgia—Hypocrites—The Sinners wear cowled Cloaks of gilded lead—The Jovial Friars of Bologna—Caiaphas . 91

CANTO XXIV

Eighth Circle—The simile of the Frost—Virgil and Dante climb up over the broken Bridge to the Bank of the Seventh Bolgia—Thieves—The naked Sinners are tormented by Serpents—Vanni Fucci—He prophesies Disaster to the Whites 95

CANTO XXV

Eighth Circle—Seventh Bolgia—Cacus—A Sinner bitten by a Serpent unites with it in the single form of a Serpent—Another Sinner bitten by a Serpent exchanges forms with it 100

CANTO XXVI

Eighth Circle—Eighth Bolgia—Evil Counsellors—Each Sinner is enveloped in a Flame—Ulysses—He relates the Story of his last Voyage 105

CANTO XXVII

Eighth Circle—Eighth Bolgia—Guido da Montefeltro—He tells of the evil counsel that he gave Boniface VIII. and of the vain effort of St. Francis to claim his soul after death 109

CANTO XXVIII

Eighth Circle—Ninth Bolgia—Its Appearance compared with the Carnage on the Battlefields of Southern Italy from earliest Times—Schismatics and Sowers of Strife—The Sinners are horribly dismembered by a Devil with a Sword—Mahomet—Curio—Mosca de' Lamberti—Bertran de Born 113

CANTO XXIX

Eighth Circle—The Poets leave the Ninth Bolgia—Geri del Bello—Tenth Bolgia—Falsifiers—The Sinners are wasted by loathsome Diseases—First class of Falsifiers, Alchemists—They are tortured by Leprosy 117

CANTO XXX

Eighth Circle—Tenth Bolgia—Three other classes of Falsifiers: False Personators, Counterfeiters, Liars—These are afflicted respectively with Madness, Dropsy and Fever—Potiphar's Wife—Sinon 122

CANTO XXXI

The Poets leave the Tenth Bolgia—The Giants—Nimrod—Antaeus sets Virgil and Dante down in the Ninth Circle, the Pit of Inferno 126

CANTO XXXII

Ninth Circle—Traitors—The Plain of Ice—Caina—Traitors to kindred—Antenora—Traitors to Party or Country—The Florentine Traitor at Montaperti—Ganelon . . 130

CANTO XXXIII

Ninth Circle—Antenora—Count Ugolino—Tolomea—Traitors to Guests—Frate Alberigo—The Bodies of certain Traitors in Tolomea still alive on earth—Dante's harsh treatment of Alberigo 135

CANTO XXXIV

Ninth Circle—Judecca—Traitors to Benefactors—Lucifer—Judas—Brutus and Cassius—The Poets pass the Centre of the Earth at Lucifer's Waist and climb to the Surface on the other Side 139

PURGATORIO

CANTO I

Invocation of the Muses—Dawn on the Shore of Purgatory—The new Constellation, symbolic of the Four Cardinal Virtues—Cato, the Custodian of Purgatory—Virgil explains Dante's presence—Virgil cleanses Dante's Face from the Stains of Hell, and girds him with a Rush . 147

CANTO II

Sunrise—The Coming of the Boat with the Angelic Pilot, bringing Souls to Purgatory—Dante is dazzled by the Vision—The Souls newly landed marvel at the sight of a living Man—Dante recognizes his friend Casella among them and vainly tries to embrace him—Casella's Song—The Souls listening to it are rebuked by Cato who sends them forward on their journey 151

CANTO III

Ante-Purgatory—The first class of the Negligent, Souls of those who died excommunicated but repentant—Manfred 155

CANTO IV

Ante-Purgatory—The Poets begin the Ascent of the Mountain —The second class of the Negligent, Souls of those who deferred repentance until the close of Life—Belacqua . 159

CANTO V

Ante-Purgatory—The third class of the Negligent, Souls of those who died by violence but repented—Buonconto da Montefeltro—Pia de' Tolomei 164

CANTO VI

Ante-Purgatory—Efficacy of Intercessory Prayer—Fourth class of the Negligent, Souls of those who delayed repentance because of engrossment in Public Affairs—Meeting with Sordello—Apostrophe to Italy 168

CANTO VII

Ante-Purgatory—Fourth class of the Negligent—Sordello's Tribute to Virgil—Night stays the Ascent—Sordello takes the Poets to the Valley of the Princes—Rudolph of Hapsburg—Charles of Anjou 172

CANTO VIII

Ante-Purgatory—The Valley of the Princes—The Two Guardian Angels—Nino Visconti—The Three Stars—The Serpent—Conrad Malaspina 176

CANTO IX

Ante-Purgatory—Dante's Dream—Lucia—The Gate of Purgatory—The Keeper of the Gate—The Three Steps—The Seven P's—The Two Keys—The Poets enter Purgatory . 181

CANTO X

Purgatory—The First Ledge—Penance for the Vice of Pride —The Carvings on the Mountain-wall, illustrating Humility 185

CANTO XI

The First Ledge—Pride—Paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer—Omberto Aldobrandesco—Oderisi of Gubbio—Provenzan Salvani 189

CANTO XII

The First Ledge—Pride—Carvings on the floor of the Ledge illustrating this Vice—The Angel—The Removal of the First P—The Hill of San Miniato—The Ascent to the Second Ledge 193

CANTO XIII

The Second Ledge—Penance for the Vice of Envy—Instances of Love, given by mysterious Voices—Sapia of Siena . 198

CANTO XIV

The Second Ledge—Envy—Guido del Duca—His Denunciation of the Cities along the Arno—Examples of Envy . . 202

CANTO XV

The Second Ledge—Envy—Removal of the Second P—Virgil discourses upon temporal and spiritual Possession—The Ascent to the Third Ledge—Penance for the Vice of Wrath—Examples of Forbearance 207

CANTO XVI

The Third Ledge—Wrath—The Cloud of Smoke—Dante questions Marco as to the Cause of universal Corruption—Marco discourses upon Freewill, the human Soul, temporal and spiritual Leadership 211

CANTO XVII

The Third Ledge—Wrath—Instances of this Vice appear to Dante's Imagination—Removal of the Third P—Ascent to the Fourth Ledge—The Poets are again stayed by Night—Virgil explains the Nature of the Seven Kinds of Evil Disposition that are purged on the Seven Ledges of Purgatory 216

CANTO XVIII

The Fourth Ledge—Penance for the Vice of Sloth—Virgil continues his Discourse, expounding the Doctrine of Love and Freewill—Examples of Zeal and Sloth cried aloud by the Spirits as they run—Dante falls asleep . . 220

CANTO XIX

The Fourth Ledge—Sloth—Dante's Second Dream—The Siren—The Ascent to the Fifth Ledge—Penance for the Vice of Avarice—Pope Adrian V. 224

CANTO XX

The Fifth Ledge—Avarice—Instances of Virtuous Poverty and of Noble Use of Wealth—Hugh Capet—He cites Examples of Avarice—The Trembling of the Mountain . 229

CANTO XXI

The Fifth Ledge—Avarice—The Cause of the Trembling of the Mountain—Statius—His Eulogy of Virgil . . 233

CANTO XXII

The Ascent to the Sixth Ledge—Statius explains his presence on the Ledge of Avarice—His Conversion to Christianity due to Virgil—The Sixth Ledge—Penance for the Vice of Gluttony—The Fruit-tree and the Water-fall—Voices from the two proclaim Examples of Temperance . . 237

CANTO XXIII

The Sixth Ledge—Gluttony—The Shades wasted by unsatisfied Hunger—Forese Donati—Nella—The Immodesty of the Florentine Women 242

CANTO XXIV

The Sixth Ledge—Gluttony—Forese Donati—Bonagiunta of Lucca—Gentucca—Dante's Canzone—Death of Corso Donati predicted—The Second Fruit-tree—A Voice from the Branches cites Examples of Gluttony—The Angel—The Removal of the Sixth P 246

CANTO XXV

The Ascent to the Seventh Ledge—Statius discourses on the Relation of the Soul and Body and the aërial Body assumed after Death—The Seventh Ledge—Lust purged by Fire—Examples of Chastity cried out by the Spirits in the Flames 251

CANTO XXVI

The Seventh Ledge—Lust—Guido Guinizelli—Arnaut Daniel 255

CANTO XXVII

The Seventh Ledge—Lust—The Poets pass through the Fire—The Ascent from the Seventh Ledge—The Third Night-fall on Purgatory—Dante's Dream—Leah—Dawn—Virgil yields his Office as Guide 259

CANTO XXVIII

The Earthly Paradise—The Forest—Matilda—She explains to Dante the Nature of the Place—Lethe and Eunoë . . 264

CANTO XXIX

The Earthly Paradise—The mystic Procession of the Church 268

CANTO XXX

The Earthly Paradise—Invoked by the Figures of the Procession, Beatrice appears—Dante turning to look for Virgil finds him gone—Beatrice rebukes Dante and tells of her Care of him 273

CANTO XXXI

The Earthly Paradise—Beatrice charges Dante with Unfaithfulness—The Poet, confessing, swoons—He is plunged in Lethe—He gazes upon Beatrice unveiled . . . 277

CANTO XXXII

The Earthly Paradise—The Procession moves to a lofty Tree —Dante falls asleep—He wakes to find Beatrice seated beneath the Tree, with the Virtues—The Griffon and the others have disappeared—Allegorical Representation of the History of the Church 281

CANTO XXXIII

The Earthly Paradise—Beatrice, accompanied by the others, leaves the Tree—Dante walks beside her—She foretells the punishment of the Church's Enemies and the Coming of an Imperial Leader—She bids Dante repeat this Announcement to Mankind—The Fountain—Dante drinks of Eunoë 286

PARADISO

CANTO I

Prologue—Invocation to Apollo—Beatrice and Dante caught up into the Sphere of Fire—Beatrice reveals to him the Order of the Universe 293

CANTO II

Beatrice and Dante pass into the Heaven of the Moon—Spirits who were forced to violate Monastic Vows—The Spots on the Moon—Beatrice explains the Operation of the Heavenly Spheres 297

CANTO III

The Heaven of the Moon—Piccarda Donati—The Empress Constance 302

CANTO IV

The Heaven of the Moon—Beatrice confutes the Platonic Error of the Return of the Soul to its Native Star—She explains the Assignment of Souls to the Lower Heavens 306

CANTO V

The Heaven of the Moon—Beatrice continues her Discourse—Ascent to the Second Heaven—Mercury—Souls of the Ambitious—Justinian 310

CANTO VI

The Heaven of Mercury—Justinian—He discourses upon the Power of Rome—Inveighs against the Factions of Guelph and Ghibelline—The Seneschal Romeo 314

CANTO VII

The Heaven of Mercury—Beatrice discourses upon Redemption and the Nature of Created Things 318

CANTO VIII

The Ascent to the Third Heaven, Venus—The Souls of Lovers—Carlo Martello—He explains the Origin of variety of Disposition and Character 323

CANTO IX

The Heaven of Venus—Cunizza da Romano—Folquet of Marseilles—Rahab 327

CANTO X

The Ascent to the Fourth Heaven, the Sun—The Souls of the Theologians—St. Thomas Aquinas 332

CANTO XI

The Heaven of the Sun—St. Thomas discourses upon St. Francis of Assisi 336

CANTO XII

The Heaven of the Sun—St. Bonaventura praises St. Dominic 340

CANTO XIII

The Heaven of the Sun—Dance of the Twenty-four Saints about Dante—St. Thomas explains how Solomon was unequalled in Wisdom—He warns Dante against Hasty Judgment 345

CANTO XIV

The Heaven of the Sun—Discourse of Solomon—The Ascent to the Fifth Heaven, Mars—The Souls of Warrior Saints and Martyrs—These Souls are grouped in the Form of a Cross 349

CANTO XV

The Heaven of Mars—Cacciaguida—He contrasts the Simplicity of the Florence of his Day with the present Luxury of the City 353

CANTO XVI

The Heaven of Mars—Discourse of Cacciaguida upon his Ancestry and the Florentine Families of his Time . . 358

CANTO XVII

The Heaven of Mars—Cacciaguida reveals to Dante his Future—He urges Dante to relate to the World what he has learned on his Journey through the Realm of Spirits 362

CANTO XVIII

The Heaven of Mars—Joshua—Charlemagne—The Ascent to the Sixth Heaven, Jupiter—The Souls of the Just—These are grouped in the Form of an Eagle 367

CANTO XIX

The Heaven of Jupiter—The Eagle answers Dante's question as to the Exclusion of the Virtuous Heathen from Heaven—Prediction that the latter will rise up against Wicked Sovereigns at the Day of Judgment 371

CANTO XX

The Heaven of Jupiter—The Six preëminently Just Souls—Trajan—The Eagle explains his presence there . . 375

CANTO XXI

The Ascent to the Seventh Heaven, Saturn—The Souls of the Contemplative—The Luminous Stairway—St. Peter Damian 380

CANTO XXII

The Heaven of Saturn—St. Benedict—The Ascent to the Eighth Heaven, the Fixed Stars—Dante gazes downward through the Seven Spheres at the Earth—His contempt for its Insignificance 384

CANTO XXIII

The Heaven of the Fixed Stars—The Triumph of Christ—The Blessed Virgin—Gabriel 389

CANTO XXIV

The Heaven of the Fixed Stars—Dante is examined on the subject of Faith by St. Peter 393

CANTO XXV

The Heaven of the Fixed Stars—Dante is examined by St. James on the subject of Hope—St. John the Evangelist . 397

CANTO XXVI

The Heaven of the Fixed Stars—Dante is examined by St. John on the subject of Love—Adam—He explains the Fall of Man 402

CANTO XXVII

The Heaven of the Fixed Stars—St. Peter denounces the Crimes of the Popes—The Ascent to the Ninth Heaven, the Primum Mobile—Beatrice explains the Nature of this Sphere 406

CANTO XXVIII

The Primum Mobile or Crystalline Heaven—The Point of Light representing the Deity—The Nine Orders of Angels—Beatrice explains their Nature 410

CANTO XXIX

The Crystalline Heaven—Beatrice discourses upon the subject of the Angels 415

CANTO XXX

The Ascent to the Empyrean—The River of Light—The Sea of Light—The Rose, in which are seated the Blessed—The Seat awaiting Henry VII. 419

CANTO XXXI

The Empyrean—The Celestial Rose—Beatrice resumes her seat there—St. Bernard becomes Dante's Guide—The Blessed Virgin 423

CANTO XXXII

The Empyrean—St. Bernard explains the Order of the Blessed in the Celestial Rose—The Ave Maria sung by Gabriel . 428

CANTO XXXIII

The Empyrean—St. Bernard's Prayer to the Virgin—The mystery of the Trinity in Unity—The Union of the Divine and the Human in Christ—The Vision ends . . 432

Appendix 439

INFERNO

INFERNO

CANTO I

HALF-WAY upon the journey of our life
I roused to find myself within a forest
In darkness, for the straight way had been lost.
And oh! how painful telling what it was,
This forest wild and rough, hard to pass through,
The very thought of which renews my fear!
So bitter is it, death is scarcely more;
But yet, to treat of the good that I found there,
I speak of other things that there I saw.
I cannot rightly tell how I came there,
So full was I of slumber at the moment
At which I had abandoned the true way.
But after I had reached a mountain's foot,
The place where to its termination came
The valley which had pierced my heart with fear,
Upward I looked, and saw its shoulders clothed
Already with the rays that planet sheds,
Which leads men on aright in every path.
Then was the fear a little quieted,
Which in my heart's lake had not ceased throughout
The night that I had spent so piteously.
And like the swimmer, who with laboring breath
Has come forth from the deep, and on the shore
Turns round, and gazes at the perilous sea,
So did my spirit, which was still in flight,

Turn back to look again upon the pass,
Which no one yet had ever left alive.
Resting a while my weary body, then
I started on along the desert slope,
So that the firm foot ever was the lower;
And almost where the steep began, behold!
A leopardess, light and exceeding agile;
And she was covered with a spotted skin,
And from before my face went not away,
But rather was impeding so my path,
That many times I turned me to go back.
The time was the beginning of the morning;
The sun was mounting upward with those stars,
Which were with him when first the Love Divine
Set those fair things in motion; hence I deemed
The hour of time and the sweet season grounds
Of hoping well concerning that wild beast
Of bright and spotted coat; and yet not so,
But that the sight, which suddenly appeared
Before me, of a lion made me fear.
It seemed to me that he was coming on
Against me, with head high, and famishing,
So that the air appeared in fright at him;
And a she-wolf, who in her leanness seemed
With every craving to be loaded down,
And had ere now made many lives distressed.
She brought upon me such a heaviness,
Because of fear that sprang from sight of her,
That I lost hope of coming to the height.
And like a man whose pleasure is to gain,
But who, when comes a time which makes him lose,
In all his thoughts is saddened and laments,
E'en such this restless beast had rendered me,
Which, coming on against me, thrust me back

Little by little where the sun is silent.
While I was falling to a lower place, 61
Before my vision there disclosed himself
One whom long silence seemed to have made hoarse.
And when in that great desert I beheld 64
His form, "Have pity on me," I cried out,
"Whate'er thou art, or shade, or man indeed!"
He answered me: "Not man; man was I once, 67
And both my parents were of Lombardy,
By country, Mantuans; and I was born
Sub Julio, though late, and passed my life 70
At Rome beneath the good Augustus' rule
During the days of false and lying gods.
A poet was I, and I sang that just 73
Son of Anchises, who came forth from Troy
After the burning of proud Ilium.
But thou, why turn'st thou back to such distress? 76
Why not ascend this mountain of delight,
Which is the source and cause of every joy?"
"Art thou then, pray, that Virgil, and that fount 79
Which pours abroad so wide a stream of speech?"
Began I, answering him with bashful brow;
"Honor and light of other poets, now 82
May the long study and great love avail me,
Which made me search thy volume; for thou art
My Master and my Author; thou alone 85
Art he from whom that fair style has been taken,
Which has done honor to my name. Behold
The beast, because of whch I turned about; 88
Grant me thy help, O famous Sage, from her,
Because she makes my veins and pulses tremble."
"Thou must needs go another way," said he, 91
When he observed my tears begin to flow,
"If from this savage place thou wouldst escape;

Because this beast, at which thou criest out,
  Allows no man to pass along her way,
  But so obstructs him, that she works his death;
And has a nature so malign and evil,
  She never sates her gluttonous desire,
  And after feeding hungers even more.
Many the animals with which she wives,
  And more still shall there be, until the hound
  Shall come, and he shall make her die of grief.
His food shall not be either land or pelf,
  But wisdom, love, and valor; and between
  Feltro and Feltro shall his birth-place be;
He that low Italy shall save, for which
  The maid Camilla, and Euryalus,
  Turnus and Nisus, met their death by wounds:
And he shall hunt her through each town, until
  He shall have put her back again in hell,
  Whence Envy was the first to send her forth.
Wherefore I think and judge it best for thee,
  That thou shouldst follow me, and I as guide
  Will lead thee hence through an eternal place,
Where thou shalt hear the shriekings of despair
  Of them, the ancient spirits in their pain,
  Each one of whom proclaims the second death;
And afterwards see those, who are content
  Within the fire, because they hope to come,
  Whenever it may be, unto the blest;
To whom if thou wouldst then ascend, for that
  Shall be a soul more worthy than myself;
  With her will I leave thee when I depart,
Because that Emperor, who reigns on high,
  In that I was rebellious to His law,
  Wills not His city should be reached through me.
His sway is everywhere, and there He reigns,

There is His city, and His lofty seat;
Oh, happy he, whom thereto He elects!"
And I to him: "Poet, I beg of thee,
By that God, whom thou didst not know, if so
I may escape the present ill and worse,
That thou wilt lead me there, where thou hast said,
That I may see Saint Peter's gate, and those
Whom thou depictest in such sad estate."
Then he moved on, and I behind him kept.

CANTO II

The day was going, and the darkening air
Was taking all the living things on earth
From their fatigues; and of them I alone
Was making ready to sustain the war,
Both of the journey and the suffering,
Which memory, that errs not, shall retrace.
Ye Muses, lofty Genius, aid me now!
Thou Memory, that didst inscribe the things
I saw, here shall thy dignity appear!
"O Poet," I began, "who guidest me,
Consider thou my strength, if it suffice,
Before thou trust me to the journey's depths.
Thou sayest that the sire of Silvius
Went, still corruptible, unto the world
Immortal, and was in the senses there.
But if the Adversary of all evil
Showed him that grace, weighing the high effect
That was to spring from him, the Who and What,
It seems not to a man of mind unmeet;
For in the empyrean he was chosen
Father of fostering Rome and of her rule;

And both of these, if I shall speak the truth, 22
Were then established for the holy place,
Where sits the greatest Peter's follower.
Through going thus, for which thou laudest him, 25
He heard the things, which of his victory
And of the papal mantle were the cause.
Thither went afterwards the Chosen Vessel 28
That he might bring thence comfort for that faith
Which is the entrance to salvation's way.
But I, why should I go? or who concedes? 31
Aeneas I am not, nor am I Paul;
For that, nor I nor others deem me worthy.
Wherefore, if I should yield myself to go, 34
To go, I fear, were folly; thou art wise;
Thou understandest better than I speak."
And like to one, who unwills what he willed, 37
And for new thoughts, changes his purpose so,
That he leaves wholly what he had begun,
Such I became on that dark slope, because 40
Reflecting, I had left the enterprise,
Which was so quickly entered on at first.
"If I have rightly understood thy words," 43
Answered the shade of the Magnanimous,
"Thy soul has been attacked by cowardice,
Which oftentimes will so encumber men, 46
It turns them back from honorable deeds,
As falsely seeing does a beast which shies.
That thou mayst free thee from that fear, I now 49
Will tell thee why I came, and what I heard
At the first moment when I grieved for thee.
I was among those who are in suspense, 52
And One, blessed and beautiful, called me;
And she was such, I begged her to command.
Her eyes were gleaming brighter than the star; 55

She, in a language sweet and low, began
With an angelic voice to speak to me:
'O courteous Mantuan soul, of whom the fame
Still in the world endures, and shall endure
So long as motion lasts, my friend, but not
A friend of Fortune's, on the desert slope
Is so impeded in his journeying,
That in his terror he has turned about;
I fear lest he have strayed so far already,
That I am late in rising to his help,
By that which I have heard of him in heaven.
Now do thou go, and with thine ornate speech,
And with whate'er behoves for his release,
Give him such aid that I may be consoled.
For I am Beatrice, who bid thee go;
I left a place whither I would return;
Love moved me, and now makes me speak to thee.
When I am once again before my Lord
Thy praise shall often be upon my lips.'
Then she stood silent, and I made reply:
'Lady of virtue, thou through whom alone
The human race exceeds all else contained
Within that heaven which has the smallest circles,
So great my pleasure is if thou command,
Had I obeyed already, it were late;
No further needest thou disclose thy will.
But tell me, pray, why thou hast not forborne
Descending to this centre from the heights
Of space, whither thou burnest to return.'
'Since thou desir'st to know so inwardly,
Briefly will I relate,' she answered me,
'Why I fear not to come within this place.
Only of those things should one be in fear,
Which have a power to inflict some harm,

Of others not, for they make not afraid.
Such by the grace of God have I been made,
That by your misery I am not touched,
Nor by this burning flame am I assailed.
A gentle Lady is in heaven, who feels
Such pity of the hindrance, unto which
I send thee, that stern judgment on high breaks.
She bade Lucia come in her request,
And said: "Thy faithful one has present need
Of thee, and I commend him to thy care."
Lucia, foe of every cruelty,
Then moved, and came to that place where I was,
Seated by Rachel of the ancient time,
And said: "O Beatrice, true praise of God,
Why aidest thou not him who loved thee so,
And left the common multitude for thee?
Hearest thou not the pity of his plaint?
Seest thou not the death combatting him
Upon the river, o'er which the sea boasts not?"
Never were persons in the world so swift
To work for their own good, or fly their harm,
As I, after the speaking of these words,
To come down hither from my blessed seat,
Confiding in thy noble speech, which brings
Honor to thee and to all those who hear.'
When she had ended thus her words to me,
She turned away her gleaming eyes in tears.
Wherefore I hastened yet the more to come;
And thus I came to thee as she desired,
And took thee from before that savage beast
Obstructing the fair mountain's short ascent.
What is it, then? Why art thou halting? Why?
Why in thy heart harbor such cowardice?
Why hast thou not a spirit bold and free,

Since three such blessed ladies care for thee
  Within the court of heaven, and my words
  Are pledges to thee of so great a good!"
E'en as the flowerets in the chilly night
  Droop closed, but when the sun shines white on them
  Raise up their heads, all open on their stalks;
Such, from my broken courage, I became,
  And such good daring hastened to my heart,
  That I began to speak like one set free:
"How full of pity she who succored me!
  How courteous thou, who wert so swift to heed
  The words of truth that she made known to thee!
Thou hast disposed my heart with such desire
  Of following after thee by these thy words,
  I have returned unto my first intent.
Now lead thou onward; one sole will is ours,
  My Guide, my Lord, my Master thou alone."
  Thus had I spoken, and he, moving on,
I entered on the deep and savage way.

CANTO III

THROUGH ME YE GO TO THE ABODE OF WOE;
  THROUGH ME YE GO TO THE ETERNAL PAIN;
  THROUGH ME YE GO TO BE AMONG THE LOST.
HIS JUSTICE MOVED MY LOFTY MAKER'S WILL,
  AND HE, WHO MADE ME, IS THE POWER DIVINE,
  THE HIGHEST WISDOM, AND THE PRIMAL LOVE.
BEFORE I WAS WERE NO CREATED THINGS,
  BUT THE ETERNAL; I ETERNAL STAND;
  LEAVE EVERY HOPE BEHIND, YE WHO GO IN.
These words, of color indistinct and dark,
  I saw there written high upon a Gate;

"Master," said I, "their sense is hard to me."
And he, as one discerning clearly, said:
"Here it behoves us leave behind all fear,
All cowardice must die; for we are come
Unto the place of which I said to thee,
That thou shouldst there behold the wretched souls,
By whom the Good of knowledge has been lost."
And after he had laid his hand on mine,
With cheerful look, which comforted my heart,
He brought me in unto the secret things.
Here sighings and lamentings and deep cries
Of pain resounded through the starless air,
Whereat my tears began to flow at first.
Strange tongues and speeches horrible, the words
Of suffering, accents of rage, and voices
Both deep and hoarse, and with them sounds of hands,
United in a tumult, whirling on
Forever through that air of timeless gloom,
Like sand borne onward by the circling wind.
And I, whose head was girt with horror, said:
"My Master, what is that I hear, and who
Are they that seem so overcome with pain?"
And he to me: "This mode of misery
Is followed by the wretched souls of those,
Who lived with neither infamy nor praise.
For they are mingled with that caitiff choir
Of angels, who were not rebellious, nor
Were faithful unto God, but were for self.
The heavens expelled them so as not to be
Less fair; the depths of hell receive them not,
Because the damned would make of them their boast."
And I: "Master, what grief have they so great,
That leads them to lament so bitterly?"
He answered: "I will tell thee in few words.

These have no hope of death, and their blind lives
Are so debased, that they are envious
Of every other lot. The world forbids
That any fame of them should ever be;
Mercy and Justice hold them in disdain,
Let us not speak of them; but look, and pass."
And I beheld a banner as I looked,
Which moved so quickly in its whirling course,
That it appeared to me to spurn all rest;
And after it there came a train of folk
So long, that I could never have believed
Death had undone so great a multitude;
And when I had made out one here, one there,
I saw and knew the shade of him who made
The great refusal through his cowardice.
Instantly then I knew with certainty
That these were of the sect of caitiff souls,
Displeasing both to God and to His foes.
These wretches, who had never been alive,
Were naked, and were stung unceasingly
By wasps and by the gadflies that were there,
And these had made their faces stream with blood,
Which, mingled with their tears, fell to their feet,
And there was gathered up by loathsome worms.
When next I set myself to look beyond,
I saw a folk on a great river's bank;
Wherefore I said: "My Master, grant me now
To know these, who they are, and what the law
That makes them show such eagerness to cross,
As through the faint light I can now discern."
And he to me: "These things shall be made known
When we ourselves have come to stay our steps
Upon the dismal shores of Acheron."
Then with ashamed and downcast eyes, in fear

Lest words of mine were burdensome to him,
I kept from speaking till we reached the stream.
And lo! toward us coming in a boat,
An old man with the whitened hair of age,
And crying: "Woe to you, ye souls depraved!
Hope not to ever see the sky again;
I come to take you to the other shore,
Into eternal darkness, heat and cold.
And thou, who standest there, thou living soul,
Depart from these, the dead." But when he saw
That I departed not, he said to me:
"Along another way, by other ports
Shalt thou come to the shore, not here, to pass;
A lighter boat than mine must carry thee."
Then said my Leader: "Charon, be not vexed,
It is so willed where power is to do
That which is willed; and more than that ask not."
Thereon were quieted the woolly jaws
Of him who ferries o'er the livid marsh,
And who around his eyes had wheels of flame.
But to the weary, naked souls there came
A change of color, and a chattering
Of teeth, soon as they heard the cruel words.
They fell to blasphemy, cursing their God,
Their parents, the whole race; the place and time
And seed of their begetting and their birth;
And afterwards they all together moved
With loud lamenting to the evil bank
Awaiting every man who fears not God.
Charon, the Demon of the blazing eyes,
Now beckoning to them collects them all,
And whosoe'er delays smites with his oar.
As in the end of autumn drop the leaves,
One following the other, till at last

The branch sees all its spoils upon the ground,
In such wise did the evil seed of Adam
Cast themselves down from that shore, one by one,
At signals, as the bird at his recall.
So they departed over the brown waves,
And ere they disembarked on yonder strand,
A new throng had assembled on this side.
"My son," the courteous Master said to me,
"All those who perish in the wrath of God
Come here together out of every land.
And they are prompt to pass the stream, because
Justice divine so spurs them on, that fear
Has been transformed in them into desire.
No good soul ever passes by this way;
And so, if Charon frets because of thee,
Well mayst thou know what his speech signifies."
When he had ceased to speak, the dusky plain
Trembled so violently, that the thought
Of such a terror bathes me now with sweat.
The tearful land gave forth a wind, which flashed,
As does the lightning, with vermilion light,
That overcame my senses utterly;
And I, like one whom slumber seizes, fell.

CANTO IV

The deep sleep in my head was broken off
By heavy thundering, so that I roused
Myself like one who has been waked by force;
And risen erect I cast around my eye
Now rested, and gazed fixedly to learn
The place in which I was; and verily
I found that I was standing on the brink

Above the woful vale of the abyss,
Which gathers into thunder endless wailings.
So dark and deep and full of clouds it was
That though my steadfast glances searched the depth
I could not there distinguish anything.
"Descend we now to the blind world below,"
The Poet, pale as death, began to say,
"I will be first, and thou shalt follow me."
And I, who had observed his color, said:
"But how shall I come, if thou art afraid,
Who art my wonted comfort in my doubt?"
And he to me: "The anguish of the folk
Who are below, has painted on my face
The pity which thou deemest to be fear.
Let us go on; the long way urges us."
So he advanced, and so made me go in
To the first circle girding the abyss.
As I was listening I heard no sound
Of lamentation there, save only sighs,
Which caused a tremor in the eternal air;
This came from those not tortured, but in grief,
The crowds that were so many and so great
Of infants and of women and of men.
Then the good Master said: "Thou askest not
Who are the spirits that thou seest here?
I would that thou shouldst know, ere thou go on,
That they sinned not; but that they have deserts
Suffices not, for they were not baptized,
Which is a part of that faith thou dost hold.
And if they were before Christianity,
They did not pay due worship unto God;
Numbered with such as these am I myself.
For such defects, and not for other guilt,
Are we among the lost, afflicted solely

In that we live in longing without hope."
When I had heard this, great woe seized my heart,
Because I knew that people of great worth
Were there within that Limbo in suspense.
"Tell me, my Master, tell me, Lord," said I,
Desirous of assurance in that faith,
Which conquers every error, "has it been,
That ever one went hence by his desert,
Or by another's, and was later blessed?"
And he, who understood my covert speech,
Replied: "I was but new in this estate,
When I saw come to us a Mighty One,
Wearing a crown in sign of victory.
He drew from here the shade of our first parent,
Of his son Abel, and of Noah; of Moses,
The Giver of the Law, the obedient;
The patriarch Abraham; David, the King;
Israel with his father, and his sons,
And Rachel, for whose sake he did so much;
And many others; and He made them blessed;
And I would have thee know that ere their day
No human spirits ever had been saved."
We had not ceased to go because he spoke,
But kept on through the forest all the while,
The forest, say I, of the crowded spirits.
Our way had not yet led us far beyond
Where I had slept, when I beheld a fire
Which overcame a hemisphere of darkness.
We were a little distance from it yet,
Though not so far but I discerned in part,
That honorable people held that place.
"O thou, who dost such honor both to art
And science, who are these so honored here,
That it divides them from the others' state?"

And he: "The honorable fame of these,
Which in thy life above resounds abroad,
Wins heaven's favor, that advances them."
At the same time a voice was heard by me:
"Honor the highest Poet, for his shade,
That had departed from us, now returns."
And when the voice to silence died away,
I saw four mighty shades draw on towards us,
Their semblance neither that of grief nor joy.
Then the good Master thus began to speak:
"Note thou the one with that sword in his hand,
Who comes before the three as if their lord;
That one is Homer, poet sovereign,
The second there Horace the satirist;
Ovid is third, and Lucan is the last.
Because each one shares with me in the name,
Which by the single voice was heralded,
They do me honor, and therein do well."
Thus saw I come together the fair school
Of these, the masters of the loftiest song,
That soars with eagle-flight above the rest.
When they together had conversed a while,
They turned to me with sign of salutation;
And he who was my Master smiled thereat.
They paid me a far greater honor still,
In that they made me of their company,
And I among such wisdom was a sixth.
Thus we passed on within the light, with talk
Of things, which silence here becomes as well
As utterance did there where we conversed.
We came unto a noble castle's base,
Encircled seven times with lofty walls,
Defended round with a fair rivulet.
And this we passed as though 'twere solid ground;

Through seven gates I entered with these sages,
And came upon a meadow fresh and green.
People with slow and earnest eyes were there,
Having the look of great authority;
They spoke but seldom, and with gentle voices.
Withdrawing thus toward one side we came
Into an open, luminous, high place,
Where every one was plainly visible.
Upon the green enamel there in front
Were pointed out to me the mighty spirits,
Whom but to have seen I magnify myself.
I saw Electra with companions many,
Among whom I knew Hector and Aeneas;
Caesar in armor, with his falcon eyes;
Penthisilea with Camilla joined,
And King Latinus on the other hand,
By whom Lavinia, his daughter, sat.
I saw that Brutus who drove Tarquin forth,
Lucretia, Julia, Marcia, and Cornelia;
And at one side, alone, the Saladin.
When I had raised my brows a little more,
I saw the Master of the Knowing seated
Among his philosophic family.
All eyes are on him, him they honor all;
There Socrates and Plato I beheld,
Standing before the others, nearest him;
Democritus, who based the world on chance;
Diogenes, Anaxagoras, and Thales,
Empedocles, Heraclitus, and Zeno;
The good collector of the qualities,
Dioscorides, I mean; Orpheus, Tully,
Livy, and Seneca, the moralist;
Euclid, geometer, and Ptolemy,
Hippocrates, and Avicenna, Galen;

Averrhoës, who the great Comment made.
I cannot here make record of them all,
Because my long theme so impels me on,
That many times my words come short of fact.
The six-fold company becomes but two;
Another way the wise Guide leads me forth,
Out of the quiet to the trembling air;
And I have reached a place where naught gives light.

CANTO V

From the first circle I descended thus
Down to the second, which engirds less space,
And pain the more, that goads to cries of woe.
There Minos stands in horrid guise, and snarls;
Examining the sins there at the entrance,
Judges, and sends as he entwines himself.
I mean, that when the ill-born soul has come
Before him, it confesses utterly;
And that discriminator of its sins,
Noting what place in hell is due to it,
Winds round himself his tail so many times
As the degrees he wills it be put down.
Ever before him stands a multitude;
Each soul in turn advances to its doom,
It speaks and hears, and then is hurled below.
"O thou that to the woful hostelry
Art come," said Minos on beholding me,
Suspending the discharge of his great office,
"Look how thou enterest, and in whom thy trust;
Let not the wideness of the way delude thee."
"Why criest thou too?" my Leader said to him;
"Hinder him not upon his destined way,

For it is so decreed, where power is
To do that which is willed; ask thou no more."
Now are beginning to be heard the notes
Of those who suffer; now I have advanced
To where much lamentation strikes my ear.
I came into a place mute of all light,
Which bellows like the ocean in a storm
When it is beaten by contending winds.
The infernal hurricane, which never rests,
Carries along the spirits in its sweep;
Whirling and buffeting, it vexes them.
When they are come in presence of the ruin,
There the shrill cries, the plaint and the lament;
There are they blasphemous 'gainst Power Divine.
I understood how to a punishment
Like this the carnal sinners are condemned,
Who make their reason subject to desire.
As by their wings the starlings are borne on,
When comes the cold, in flocks wide-spread and full,
So were the evil spirits by that blast;
This way and that it sweeps them, up and down;
They are not comforted by any hope
Of resting, and not even of less pain.
And as the cranes go singing their sad lays,
Making themselves a long-drawn line in air,
So I saw coming, uttering their wails,
Shades borne on that commotion I have named;
Wherefore I said: "Master, what folk are these,
To whom the black air gives such chastisement?"
"The foremost one of those, concerning whom
Thou fain wouldst learn," replied he then, "was once
An Empress over many languages.
To vice of carnal sin so given o'er
The lustful she made lawful by decree,

To take away the blame she had incurred.
She is Semiramis, of whom we read
That she succeeded Ninus, first his spouse;
She held the land which now the Sultan rules.
The other, she who slew herself for love,
With the ashes of Sichaeus breaking faith;
Next, Cleopatra the voluptuous.
And there is Helen, for whose sake revolved
So many guilty seasons; yonder see
The great Achilles, whose last foe was love.
See Paris; Tristan." And he pointed out
More than a thousand shades, calling their names,
Whose earthly life had been cut off by love.
When I had heard my Teacher name to me
Those dames and cavaliers of olden time,
I felt such pity, I was nigh dismayed.
And I began: "Poet, I fain would speak
With those two yonder, who go side by side,
And seem to be so light upon the wind."
And he to me: "Thou shalt observe when they
Draw near to us; then call them in the name
Of Love, that is their guide, and they will come."
Soon as the wind had bent their course toward us,
I lifted up my voice: "O weary souls,
Come speak with us, if it be not forbidden."
As doves, when summoned by their longing, fly
On open, steady wings to the sweet nest,
Borne onward through the air by their desire;
So left they then the throng where Dido was,
And came to us through the malignant air,
So powerful was my affection's call.
"O living creature, gracious and benign,
Who art now journeying through this black air,
Visiting us who dyed the world blood-red,

Were now the Universal King our friend,
We both would pray to Him to grant thee peace,
Because thou pitiest our wayward ill.
What pleases thee to hear, and what to speak,
That we will hear, and thereof speak to you,
While yet the wind is hushed for us, as now.
The city, wherein I was born, is there
Beside the sea-shore, where the Po comes down
To be at rest with all his followers.
Love, that is quick to catch in gentle heart,
Enamoured this one of the comely form
Taken from me; the manner grieves me still.
Love, that absolves from love no one beloved,
Enamoured me so deeply of his charm,
Thou seest even now it leaves me not.
Love led us on to a united death;
Caina waits for him who quenched our life."
These were the words that came to us from them.
No sooner heard I those afflicted souls,
Than I bowed down my face, and held it low
So long, the Poet said: "What thinkest thou?"
When I made answer I began: "Alas!
How many the sweet thoughts, what great desire
Led on these souls unto the woful pass!"
Thereon I turned to them again to speak,
And said: "Francesca, what thou sufferest
Afflicts me in my pity even to tears.
But tell me, at the time of those sweet sighs,
What token and what way Love granted you,
That ye did know the dubious desires?"
And she to me: "There is no greater pain
Than to remember in one's misery
The happy time; and that thy Teacher knows.
But if thou cherishest so great desire

To learn what was the first root of our love,
That I will tell, as one who tells in tears.
One day we had been reading for delight
Of Lancelot, how Love had urged him on;
We were alone; suspicion had we none;
And more than once that reading made our eyes
To meet, and changed the color in our faces;
But one point only was it conquered us:
When we had read how that the longed-for smile
Was there impressed with such a lover's kiss,
This one, who nevermore shall be disjoined
From me, all trembling, kissed me on the mouth.
Gallehaut was the book, and he who wrote it;
That day we read in it no further on."
While the one spirit had been saying this,
The other wept so bitterly, that I,
As I had died, for very pity swooned;
And fell, as falls the body of one dead.

CANTO VI

When next my mind returned, that closed itself
Before the pity of the kindred pair
Which utterly confounded me with grief,
New tortures and new tortured souls I see
Around me, whichsoever way I move,
Where'er I turn, wherever I may gaze.
I am at the third circle, of the rain
Unending, baleful, cold and burdensome,
Whose rule and quality are never new.
Great hailstones, water dark with filth, and snow
Pour down together through the gloomy air;
The earth receiving them gives forth a stench;
And Cerberus, a cruel and strange beast,

From out his triple throat barks like a dog
Over the people that are there submerged.
His eyes are red, his beard is black with grease,
His belly huge; his paws are armed with nails;
He claws the spirits, bites and lacerates.
Under the rain, which makes them howl like dogs,
They make one side a screen to shield the other;
And often the unhallowed wretches turn.
When Cerberus perceived us,—the great worm,—
Opening his mouths he showed his fangs to us,
And had no limb that he held steady then.
Thereupon my Leader opened wide his hands,
Took of the earth, and with his fists both full
Cast it within those gullets ravenous.
As is the dog who in his hunger barks
And then grows quiet when he bites his food,
Intent alone on struggling to devour it,
So had become those squalid visages
Of Cerberus the demon, thundering
Over the souls so that they fain were deaf.
We walked upon the very shades, laid low
Beneath the heavy rain; our feet would fall
Upon the empty semblance of their forms.
They all were lying on the ground, save one
Who raised himself and sat upright as soon
As he observed us pass in front of him.
"O thou who art conducted through this hell,"
Said he to me, "recall me, if thou canst;
For thou wast made ere I had been unmade."
And I to him: "The anguish that thou hast
Perchance has put thee from my memory,
So that it seems not that I ever saw thee.
But tell me who thou art, that hast been given
In such a woful place such punishment,

Though other greater, none displeases so."
And he to me: "Thy city, now so full
Of envy that the sack is running over,
Held me within it in the life of light.
I was called Ciacco by you, citizens;
And for the damning sin of gluttony,
As thou dost see, I languish in the rain.
And I, sad soul, am not alone in this,
For all these others bear like penalty
For like offence." And further spoke no word.
Then made I answer: "Ciacco, thy distress
So weighs upon me that it bids me weep.
But tell me, if thou know'st, to what will come
The citizens of the divided city;
If one of them be just; tell me the cause
Why by such discord she has been assailed."
And he to me: "After long quarreling
There shall be bloodshed, till the silvan party
Drives forth the other with great injury.
And afterwards shall come this party's fall
Within three suns, and that one shall rise up
Through that one's power who temporizes now.
A long time shall it carry high its head,
Keeping the other under heavy loads,
Howe'er it grieve and suffer shame thereby.
Two men are just but are not listened to;
For pride and envy, joined to avarice
Have been three sparks to set men's hearts on fire."
Here brought he to an end the tearful sound;
And I: "I fain would have thee teach me still,
Bestowing on me gift of further speech.
Farinata and Tegghiaio, worthy both,
Jacopo Rusticucci, Arrigo, Mosca,
And others who were minded to do good,

Tell me where they are, let me know of them;
For great desire constrains me now to learn
If heaven soothe or hell be poisoning them."
And he: "They are among the blacker souls;
A different sin weights them to lower depths.
If thou go down so far, there thou shalt see them.
But when thou art again in the sweet world,
I pray, bring me to the memory of men.
More I say not, nor more will answer thee."
His forthright gazing eyes he rolled asquint,
Viewed me a little while; then bowed his head,
And fell with it in blindness like the rest.
My Leader said: "No more shall he rise up
This side the sound of the angelic trump.
When on that day the hostile power shall come
Each one shall find again the woful tomb,
Shall take again his flesh and wonted shape,
Shall hear what thunders on forevermore."
Through the foul mixture of the shades and rain
Were we thus moving forward with slow steps,
Touching a little on the life to come.
Wherefore I said: "Master, these torturings,
Will they increase when the great doom has passed,
Or lessen, or perchance burn still the same?"
And he to me: "Return unto thy learning,
Which holds that as a thing more perfect grows,
It grows more conscious both of good and pain.
And so, though this accursed folk advance
To true perfection never, they expect
Thereafter to be more than they are now."
We followed by that road our circling course,
Saying much more, which I do not recount,
And reached the point where the descent begins.
There found we Pluto, the great enemy.

CANTO VII

"PAPE SATAN, pape Satan, aleppe!"
When Pluto thus began with clucking voice,
That gentle Sage, learned in everything,
Said for my comfort: "Suffer not thy fear
To harm thee, for whatever power he have
Shall not stay thee from going down this rock."
Then turned he him around to that puffed face,
And said: "Be silent, thou accursed wolf!
Consume thee inwardly with thine own rage!
Not without cause go we to the abyss;
It is so willed on high where Michael
Took vengeance of the proud adultery."
Just as the sails all swelled out with the wind
Fall in a tangled heap when falls the mast,
So fell this cruel wild beast to the ground.
To the fourth hollow we descended then,
And took in more and more the woful slope
Which draws within its sack the whole world's ill.
Justice of God! oh, who but Thee heaps up
The sum of pains and travails strange I saw!
Why does our sin so make us waste away?
As there above Charybdis breaks the wave,
Dashing against another meeting it,
So here it was decreed the folk should dance.
Here saw I many more than elsewhere who
Both on this side and the other with loud howls,
Were rolling forward weights by push of chest.
They struck against each other, and just there
Each whirled around, and, rolling back, would cry:
"Why holdest thou?" "Why throwest thou away?"
Thus each returned along the gloomy round

On either hand to the point opposite
To greet each other with their shameful cry;
When he had reached it, each one turned anew
Through his half circle to the other joust.
And I, whose heart was, as it were, transfixed,
Exclaimed: "My Master, now make plain to me
What folk this is; and if these all were priests,
These tonsured ones upon our left hand here."
And he: "These all, when in the former life,
Looked so obliquely with the mind, that they
Made no expenditure with measure due.
Most plainly do their voices bark this out,
When they have reached the two points of the circle,
Where they are by the converse sin repelled.
Those on whose heads no covering is of hair
Were priests and popes and cardinals, in whom
The mastery was held by avarice."
And I: "Master, among such folk as these
There must be some whom I should recognize,
Who suffered the defilement of these sins."
And he to me: "Vain thoughts thou harborest;
The undiscerning life, which made them sordid,
Makes them obscure to all discerning now.
Forever shall they come to these two buttings;
These shall come forth from out their sepulchres [close.
With fists clenched tight, and those with hair cropped
Ill-giving and ill-keeping took from them
The fair world's use, and set them here in strife
Of such a sort no words of mine shall grace.
Now seest thou, son, how brief the mockery
Of goods committed unto Fortune's care,
For which mankind buffet each other so.
For all the gold that is beneath the moon,
Or ever was, would not have power to give

Repose to one of all these weary souls."
"Master," said I to him, "now tell me, too:
This Fortune, which thou speak'st of, what is it,
Which holds the world's goods in its clutches so?"
And he to me: "O foolish creatures, ye!
How great the ignorance that works your harm!
I pray, my judgment of her now take in.
That One, of knowledge all transcendent, made
The heavens, and appointed them their guides,
So that each part on every other shines,
Dispensing equally the light abroad.
Likewise, above the splendors of the world
He set a general minister and guide,
Who should betimes transfer this empty wealth
From race to race and from this stock to that,
Above prohibiting by human thought.
Hence one race rules, another languishes.
Both in obedience to her decree,
Which is concealed, as in the grass the snake.
Your knowledge has no power to stop her course;
Foreseeing, she decrees and executes
Her kingdom's laws, as theirs the other gods.
Her permutations know no time of truce;
Necessity compels her to be swift,
So often comes one who shall know a change.
And this is she who is so crucified,
Even by those who ought to give her praise,
But give her blame amiss and ill report.
But her estate is bliss; she hears it not.
Happy among the other primal creatures,
She turns her sphere and joys in blissful life.
But let us now descend to greater woe.
Each star that upward moved when I went forth
Is falling now; to linger is forbidden."

We crossed the circle to the other bank,
Above a boiling spring, which overflows
Down through a cleft that has beginning there.
The stream was darker far than any perse;
And we accompanied the dusky waves,
Now entering a downward pathway strange.
A marsh, that bears the name of Styx, it forms,
This cheerless rivulet, when it has reached
The foot of these malignant, grayish slopes.
And I, who stood intently looking down,
Saw people there bemired in that slough,
All naked, and in semblance sorely vexed.
They struck each other, not alone with hands,
But with the head and breast and with the feet,
And maimed each other piecemeal with their teeth.
Then the good Master said: "Son, now thou viewest
The souls of those whom anger overcame;
And too, I will that thou believe this truth,
That 'neath the water there are some who sigh,
Making the water bubble at the top,
As the eye tells thee, wheresoe'er it turn.
Fixed in the slime they say: 'Sullen were we
In the sweet air that's gladdened by the sun,
Having within our hearts the smoke of sloth;
Now we are sullen in the swarthy mire.'
This hymn they gurgle in their throats, because
With perfect words they can not utter it."
We passed between the dry bank and the swamp
Far on the circle of the filthy fen,
With eyes turned toward those gulping down the mire,
Until at last we stood beneath a tower.

CANTO VIII

I say, continuing, that long before
Our coming to the foot of that high tower,
Our glances had gone upward to its top,
For we had seen two flamelets set there, while
Another sent back signal from so far,
The eye had barely power to take it in.
Turned to the sea of all intelligence
I said: "What does this say? and what replies
The other fire, and who are they that make it?"
And he to me: "Over the slimy waves
What is expected thou mayst now discern,
If the marsh vapor hide it not from thee."
Never did bowstring speed its arrow forth
That it flew onward through the air so swift,
As I beheld a little boat come on
Across the water toward us instantly
Under the guidance of a single boatman,
Who cried aloud: "Art thou now come, fell soul?"
"Phlegyas, Phlegyas, thou criest all in vain
For this once," said my Lord. "Us thou shalt hold
No longer than while passing o'er the slough."
Like one who listens to some great deceit
That has been done him, and resents it sore,
Phlegyas became then in his gathered wrath.
My Guide went down into the little bark,
And after him then made me enter it,
And it seemed laden first when I was in.
Soon as the Guide and I were in the boat
The ancient prow set forth, cleaving the water
Deeper than it was wont with other souls.
When over the dead channel we were speeding

Before us rose one full of mire and said:
"Now, who art thou, that com'st before thy time?"
And I to him: "Although I come, I stay not;
But who art thou, that art become so foul?"
"Thou seest I am one of those who weep."
And I to him: "With weeping and with wailing,
Accursed spirit, do thou still remain!
For thee I know, although thou art all filth."
Then toward the boat he stretched out both his hands.
Wherefore the prudent Master thrust him back,
Saying: "Away! Down with the other dogs!"
This done, around my neck he threw his arms,
And kissed my face, and said: "Disdainful soul,
Blessed is she who bore thee in her bosom!
That one was arrogant when in the world;
There is no goodness decks his memory,
And therefore is his shade so furious here.
How many hold themselves up there to be
Great kings, who shall stand here like swine in mire,
Leaving behind them horrible dispraise!"
And I to him: "Master, greatly should I
Rejoice to see him stifled in the stew
Before the time when we shall leave the lake."
And he to me: "Ere the shore lets itself
Be seen by thee, thou shalt be satisfied.
'Tis fitting thou have joy of such desire."
Shortly thereafter I beheld him torn
In such a manner by the muddy folk
That I still praise and thank my God for it.
They all cried out: "Have at Filippo Argenti!"
At that the spirit of the Florentine
In rage turned on himself with his own teeth.
We left him there; therefore of him I say
No more. But on my ears there smote such woe,

I opened wide my eyes, intent ahead.
Then the good Master said to me: "My son,
The city now draws near whose name is Dis,
With weighty citizens, with great array."
And I: "Already, Master, I discern
Its mosques distinctly in the valley yonder,
Vermilion, as if they had issued forth
From fire." And he to me: "The eternal fire
Enkindling them within displays them red,
As thou observest in this nether hell."
We came at length within the fosses deep
Encompassing that land disconsolate;
Its walls appeared to me to be of iron.
Not without making a wide circuit first
Reached we a place where with loud voice the boatman
Cried to us: "Get you out! Here is the entrance."
More than a thousand of those rained from heaven
I saw above the gates, who angrily
Exclaimed: "Who is that one, who without death
Goes through the kingdom of the people dead?"
And then the Sage, my Master, made a sign
Of wishing to speak with them secretly.
Repressing somewhat of their great disdain,
They said: "Come thou alone! Let him depart,
Who with such zeal has come within this realm!
Let him go back alone by the mad road!
Try, if he can; for thou shalt here remain,
Who hast been showing him so dark a country."
Think, reader, if I was discomfited,
Hearing the sound of the accursed words;
For I deemed not that I should e'er return.
"O my dear Guide, who more than seven times
Hast brought me back to safety and hast drawn
From the deep peril that confronted me,

"Leave me not thus undone," I said; "and should
It be denied us to go further on,
Let us retrace our steps together, quickly."
And that Lord, who had led me thither, said:
"Have thou no fear; because our passage, given
By Such an one, no one may take from us.
But here await me; and the weary spirit
Comfort and feed with good expectancy;
I will not leave thee in the nether world."
Thus goes away and there abandons me
The gentle Father, and I stay in doubt,
For "yes" and "no" contend within my head.
I could not hear what he held forth to them;
But he had not been standing with them long,
When each in emulation ran within.
Then these our adversaries shut the gates
Before my Lord's breast, who remained without
And turned him back to me with footsteps slow.
His eyes were fixed upon the ground; his brows
Were shorn of boldness, as he, sighing, said:
"Who has forbidden me the abodes of woe?"
And then to me: "Thou, though I am enraged,
Be not dismayed, for I shall bide the test,
Whate'er they go about within to stay me;
For this their overweening is not new.
They used it once at a less secret gate,
Which to this day remains without a bolt.
Above it thou didst see the dead inscription;
And now this side of it descends the steep,
Passing the circles unescorted, One
By whom the land shall opened be to us."

CANTO IX

THAT color which faintheartedness had put
Upon my face, seeing my Guide turn back,
Repressed the sooner his unwonted hue.
He stopped like one intently listening;
Because the eye could not conduct him far
Through the black air and through the heavy mist.
"It must be, though, that we shall win the fight,"
Began he, "else . . . such aid was offered us.
Oh, how I long to have Another come!"
I plainly saw how he had covered up
What he began to say with other words
That followed and were different from the first.
But none the less his language gave me fear,
For I drew out the interrupted speech
Perchance to a worse purport than he meant.
"Down to this depth of the distressful hollow
Do ever any come from that first grade,
Whose only punishment is hope cut off?"
So questioned I, and thus he answered me:
"Rarely it comes to pass that one of us
Goes on the journey which I now am making.
'Tis true that I was conjured hither once
By that Erichtho, cruel one, who used
Unto their bodies to call back the shades.
My flesh had been but short time bare of me
When she forced me to go within that wall
To bring a spirit of Judas' circle thence.
That is the lowest and the darkest place
And farthest from the heaven that turns all;
Well do I know the road; so be at rest. [forth,
This marsh, from which the great stench is breathed

Engirds the doleful city round about,
Which now we can not enter without anger."
And more he said, which I have not in mind;
Because my eye had wholly drawn me toward
The lofty tower with the glowing top,
Where in an instant risen suddenly
Were three infernal furies, stained with blood,
Who had the limbs of women and the mien;
And they were girt with greenest water-snakes;
Small serpents and horned snakes had they for hair,
Wherewith their savage brows were clasped about.
And he, who well did know the maids of her,
Of never-ending lamentation Queen,
Exclaimed: "Behold the fierce Erinyes!
They are: Megaera at the left; upon
The right, Alecto weeping, and between
The two, Tisiphone;" and then was silent.
Each with her nails made gashes in her breast;
Beat themselves with their palms, and shrieked so loud,
That I drew close to the Poet in my fear.
"Medusa, come! Turn him to stone will we,"
They all were crying, looking down. " 'Twas ill
We failed to avenge on Theseus his assault."
"Turn backward; keep thy face concealed, for if
The Gorgon shows herself and thou see her,
No more returning upward would there be."
So said the Master; and then he himself
Turned me around, nor trusted he my hands,
But with his own besides he closed my eyes.
O ye who have sound intellects, observe
The doctrine that is here, hiding itself
Beneath the veil of the unwonted verses!
And now was coming o'er the turbid waves
The crashing of a sound, full of affright,

Wherewith began to tremble both the shores;
Not otherwise than that made by a wind,
Impetuous because of adverse heats,
Which smites the forest, and with naught to check,
Shivers the branches, beats and bears them off;
With dust before it, it goes on superb,
Making the wild beasts and the shepherds flee.
He set my eyes free, saying: "Now direct
The nerve of sight across that ancient scum,
Yonder to where the smoke is bitterest."
As frogs before their enemy the snake
All scatter through the water, vanishing,
Till each is squatting huddled on the land;
More than a thousand ruined souls I saw
Thus fleeing from before One, who on foot
Was passing over Styx with soles unwet.
He moved aside that thick air from his face,
Bringing his left hand oft in front of it,
And only with that trouble seemed he weary.
Perceiving that he was a Messenger
From heaven, I turned to the Master, who made sign
That I stand quiet and bow down to him.
Oh, how disdainful he appeared to me!
He came to the gate, and with a little wand
He opened it; resistance there was none.
"Outcasts of heaven! Thou despised folk!"
Began he on the threshold horrible,
"Whence is this overweening, lodged in you?
And wherefore do ye kick against that will,
Whose end there is no power can mutilate,
And which has many times increased your pain?
What steads it you to butt against the Fates?
Your Cerberus, if ye remember well,
Has still his chin and throat worn bare therefor."

Then he returned along the filthy way,
And spoke no word to us, but had the mien
Of one whom other care constrains and pricks
Than that of him who is before his face.
And then we moved our feet toward that land,
Free from our care after those holy words;
And without any strife we entered in,
And I, who was desirous to behold
The state of things in such a fortress locked,
As soon as I was in, cast my eyes round
And saw on every hand a great plain, full
Of sorrow and of torment of the damned.
E'en as at Arles, beside the stagnant Rhone,
Or as at Pola, with Quarnero by,
That shuts in Italy and bathes her bounds,
The sepulchres make all the place uneven;
So did they here on every side, except
That here the manner was more bitter far,
Because among the tombs were scattered flames,
With which they were so heated through and through,
That iron is called for hotter by no trade.
All of their lids were lifted up; and forth
Such grievous lamentations came as seemed
In truth like those of wretched sufferers.
And I: "Master, who are the people there,
That having burial within those chests
Make themselves heard with sighing in such pain?"
And he to me: "Here the arch-heretics
Are with their followers of every sect; [laden.
And much more than thou deem'st these tombs are
Here like with like is in one sepulchre;
The monuments are heated more and less."
And, turning to the right hand, we passed on
Between the torments and high battlements.

CANTO X

Now goes his way, along a secret path
Between the torments and the city wall,
My Master, and, behind his shoulders, I.
"Virtue Supreme, that through the impious rounds
Dost turn me," I began, "as pleases thee,
Speak thou to me, and satisfy my wishes.
The people, lying in the sepulchres,
Could they be seen? Already all the lids
Are lifted up, and no one is on guard."
And he to me: "They all shall be locked in
When from Jehoshaphat they shall return
Here with the bodies they have left above.
On this side have their place of burial
With Epicurus all his followers,
Who hold that with the body dies the soul.
So, to the question thou hast put, thou shalt
Have present satisfaction here within,
And also to the wish thou utterest not."
And I: "Good Leader, I keep not my heart
Concealed from thee save thus to speak but little;
Nor now alone hast thou thereto disposed me."
"O Tuscan, who with speech so courteous
Goest through the city of the fire, alive,
May it now please thee at this place to halt.
Thy mode of speech hath manifested thee
A native of that noble fatherland,
To which, perchance, I was too troublesome."
All on a sudden had this sound come forth
From one of the sepulchres; wherefore in fear
I drew a little closer to my Leader.
And he to me: "Turn thee! What doest thou?

See Farinata, who has raised himself;
From the waist upward wholly shalt thou see him."
I had already fixed my gaze on his;
And he had risen erect with breast and brow,
As if Hell were to him in great despite.
And then the Leader's bold and ready hands
Pushed me among the sepulchres to him,
Saying to me: "Be all thy words well ordered!"
When I was at his tomb, close by the foot,
He looked at me a while, and then, as 'twere
In scorn, he asked: "Who were thy ancestors?"
And I, who was desirous to obey,
Hid it not from him, but disclosed them all.
Whereon he lifted up his brows somewhat;
Then said: "Fiercely were they adverse to me,
To my forerunners, to my partisans,
So that I twice did scatter them abroad."
"Though they were banished, they came back both times
From every quarter," I replied to him;
"But your men have not rightly learned that art."
Then close by him, uncovered to the view,
Arose a shade as far as to the chin;
I think that it had risen on its knees.
It looked about me, as if it desired
To see if there were with me some one else;
But when its expectation was all quenched,
Weeping, it said: "If thou for loftiness
Of genius go through this blind prison, then
Where is my son? Why is he not with thee?"
And I to him: "I go not of myself.
He, who waits yonder, guides me through this place;
Perchance your Guido held him in disdain."
Already had his words, and, too, the mode
Of punishment read this one's name to me,

And therefore had my answer been so full.
Uprising suddenly, he cried out: "How
Saidst thou, he *held*? Is he not living still?
Does not the sweet light strike upon his eyes?"
When he became aware of some delay
I made, ere I replied, backward he fell
Supine, and then no more appeared outside.
But the Magnanimous, at whose desire
I had here stayed my steps, changed not his aspect,
And neither moved his neck, nor bent his side.
"And if," continuing what first was said,
"They have acquired that art," said he, "but ill,
That is more torment to me than this bed.
But fifty times shall not be re-enkindled
The countenance of her, who queens it here,
Before thou learn how weighty is that art.
And, as thou wouldst return to that sweet world,
Tell me, why is so pitiless that people
Against my kin in each of its decrees?"
Wherefore I said to him: "The havoc wrought
And mighty slaughter, that dyed Arbia red,
Make such petitions in our temple rise."
When thereupon he, sighing, shook his head,
"There I was not alone," he said, "and, surely,
I had not moved with the others without cause.
But I was there alone, when every one
Assented Florence should be blotted out,
And I defended her with open face."
"Alas! So may your seed sometime find rest,"
Besought I him, "loosen for me this knot,
By which my judgment has been here enwound.
It seems, if I do hear aright, that ye
Can see beforehand what the times shall bring,
And in the present have another way."

"Like him, who has imperfect sight, we see
The things far off," he answered; "so much light
The Sovereign Ruler still doth shed on us.
When they draw nigh, or are, our intellects
Are wholly void, and if none other come
To us, nought know we of your human state.
Hence thou canst understand, that wholly dead
Will be our knowledge from that moment when
The portal of the future shall be closed."
As in compunction for my fault, I said:
"Then, you shall say now to that fallen one,
His son is with the living still conjoined.
And if, before I answered, I was dumb,
Tell him that I was so, because I thought
Already on the error you have solved."
And now my Master was recalling me;
Wherefore, in greater haste, I prayed the spirit
That he would tell me who might be with him.
"With more than a thousand lie I here," he said;
"The second Frederick, and the Cardinal
Are here within; I speak not of the rest."
Therewith he hid himself; and I toward
The ancient Poet turned my steps, my thoughts
Upon the speech that seemed to bode me ill.
He started on; and, as we walked along,
He said to me: "Why art thou so perplexed?"
And I contented him in his request.
"Let memory hold fast what thou hast heard
Against thyself," that Sage exhorted me;
"And," raising his finger, "now give heed to this:
When thou shalt be in the sweet radiance
Of that one, whose fair eyes see all, from her
Thou shalt know all the journey of thy life."
Then to the left he bent his steps, and we,

Leaving the wall, went onward toward the middle
Along a path that strikes into a vale,
Which even up there made its ill smell offend. 136

CANTO XI

Upon the edge of a high precipice
Formed by a circle of great broken rocks,
We came above a still more cruel press;
And here, by reason of the horrible 4
Excess of stench which the profound abyss
Throws up, we made approach behind the lid
Of a great tomb, on which I saw inscribed 7
The words: "Pope Anastasius I hold,
Whom from the forthright way Photinus drew."
"Our going down must needs be slow, so that 10
Our sense may first become somewhat inured
To the dismal blast, which then 'twill heed no more."
So spoke the Master; and I said: "Find thou 13
Some compensation, that the time pass not
Unused." And he: "Know that I think of that.
My son, there are within these rocks," began 16
He then to say, "three circles lessening
From grade to grade, like those which thou dost leave.
They are all full of spirits of the damned; 19
But, that henceforth sight may suffice alone,
Observe both how and why they are confined.
Of all the wickedness that earns the hate 22
Of heaven, the end is injury; and all
Such ends by force grieve others, or by fraud.
But because fraud is man's peculiar sin, 25
It more displeases God; and hence are lower
The fraudulent, and greater woe assails them.

All the first circle holds the violent; 28
But, since against three persons force is used,
It is constructed in three separate rounds.
Force may be used against one's God, one's self, 31
One's neighbors; against them, I say, or things
Of theirs, as thou shalt hear with plain discourse.
By force is death inflicted on one's neighbor, 34
And painful wounds; and on his property
Ruin, burning, and harmful plundering;
Hence murderers, those who deal evil blows, 37
Those who lay waste and rob, in various troops
Are all tormented here in this first round.
Violent hands a man may lay upon 40
Himself and his possessions; hence it comes
That in the second round in vain repents
Each one who of your world deprives himself, 43
Gambles away and dissipates his goods,
And there goes weeping where he should rejoice.
Force may be used against the Deity, 46
By a heart's denying and blaspheming Him,
And deeming Nature and God's bounty naught;
Therefore the smallest round with its own mark 49
Has set a seal on Sodom and Cahors,
And all who speak, despising God at heart.
Fraud,—for which all men's consciences are gnawed,— 52
Is practised against him who trusts in us,
And against him who cherishes no trust.
This latter mode would murderously sever 55
Only the tie of love that Nature makes;
Therefore within the second circle nest
Hypocrisy, and lies, and whosoe'er 58
Bewitches, forging, theft, and simony,
Panders, and barrators, and such like filth.
By the other mode both that love is forgotten 61

Which Nature makes, and that which afterwards
Is added and begets a special faith;
Hence in the smallest circle, at that point
Of the universe, on which is seated Dis,
Whoso betrays is to all time consumed."
And I: "Master, thy reasoning proceeds
Most clearly, and distinguishes full well
Both the abyss and those possessing it.
But do thou tell me: those of the fat marsh,
Those borne by the wind and beaten by the rain,
And those that meet each other, so harsh of tongue,
Why have they not their punishment within
The ruddy city, if God holds them so
In wrath? if not, why are they in such case?"
And he to me: "Why is it that thy wit
Doth go so far astray beyond its wont?
Or where is it thy mind is gazing else?
Rememberest thou not those words, in which
Thy Ethics thoroughly investigates
The dispositions Heaven will not abide:
Incontinence, and wickedness, and mad
Bestiality? And how incontinence
Less offends God, and so less blame incurs?
If thou wilt note well what this doctrine is,
And call back to thy memory who those are
That suffer punishment above, outside,
Thou shalt see clearly why from these fell spirits
They are set off, and wherefore less offended
Vengeance divine doth deal them hammering blows."
"O Sun, that healest every troubled vision,
Thou dost content me so, when thou dost solve,
That doubt, not less than knowledge, pleases me.
Turn once again a little back," I said,
"To where thou sayest that usury offends

Goodness divine, and loosen me the knot."
"Philosophy," said he to me, "points out,
To him who understands it, not alone
In one sole part, how Nature takes her course
From the Intellect divine and from Its art;
And if thou con thy Physics faithfully,
After not many pages thou shalt find,
That your art follows her, as best it can,
As the disciple does the master, so
That your art is, as 'twere, grandchild of God.
By both,—if thou remember Genesis
In its beginning,—it behoves mankind
To earn its livelihood and to advance.
And as the usurer takes another way,
Both in herself and in her followers
Nature he scorns, placing his hope elsewhere.
But follow now, it pleases me to go;
On the horizon are the Fishes quivering,
And wholly over Caurus lie the Wain,
And far on yonder we go down the steep."

CANTO XII

The place we reached for going down the bank
Was alpine, and, by what was there besides,
Of such a kind as every eye would shun.
As is that ruin, which, the hither side
Of Trent, struck in its flank the Adige,
Either through earthquake, or support that failed,—
For from the mountain's summit, whence it moved
Down to the plain this rock is shattered so,
'Twould give a kind of path to one above:
Such the descent was of that precipice;

And on the margin of the broken chasm
There lay outstretched the infamy of Crete,
That was conceived in the false cow; and when
He saw us there, into himself he bit,
Like one whom anger inwardly breaks down.
My Sage cried out toward him: "It may be,
Thou think'st the Duke of Athens to be here,
Who in the world above gave thee thy death!
Away from here, thou beast! this one comes not
Instructed by thy sister, but pursues
His way to look upon your punishments."
As is that bull, whose halter breaks just when
He has received the mortal stroke, and who
Can go no more, plunging this way and that;
So saw I then the Minotaur to do.
And he, perceiving, cried: "Run to the passage!
While he doth rage, 'tis well that thou descend."
So we resumed our downward way, upon
The unloading of those stones, which often moved
Beneath the novel burden of my feet.
I went on, thinking; and he said: "Perchance
Thou thinkest on this ruin in the guard
Of that beast's wrath, which I have just now quelled.
Now I would have thee know, that when I went
The other time down to the nether hell,
This cliff had not yet fallen. But certainly,
If I discern aright, it was not long
Before He came, who the great booty took
From Dis, from out the circle uppermost,
That in all parts this loathsome valley deep
So trembled, that I thought the universe
Felt love, through which, some think, the world has been
Converted into chaos many times;
And at that moment did this ancient rock

Make such a downfall here and otherwhere.
But fix thine eyes upon the valley, for
The river of blood is near, in which are boiled
All who by violence do harm to men."
O blind cupidity, guilty and mad,
Which in the brief life spurs us so, and then
So in the eternal steeps us wretchedly!
I saw a wide foss, curving in an arc,
Such that it was embracing all the plain,
According as my Guide had said; and 'twixt
The foot of the bank and it, in single file
Were running Centaurs, arrow-armed, as they
Were wont to go a-hunting in the world.
Seeing us coming down, each one stood still,
And from the troop there came forth three with bows
And javelins, that they had chosen, first.
And: "To what torment come ye, who descend
The slope?" one of them cried out from afar.
"Tell us from there; if not, I draw the bow."
My Master said: "The answer we will make
To Chiron near-by, there; unhappily
Thy will was always thus precipitate."
Then, touching me, he said: "That one is Nessus,
Who for fair Dejanira met his death,
And by himself wrought vengeance for himself;
He in the middle, gazing at his breast,
Is the great Chiron, who did train Achilles;
That other, Pholus, who was so full of wrath.
Thousands on thousands they go round the foss,
With arrows shooting souls that wrest themselves
Up from the blood more than their guilt allows."
Nearer we drew to those swift-footed beasts;
Chiron then took an arrow, and put back,
With the notch-end, his beard upon his jaws.

When he had thus uncovered his great mouth, 79
He said to his companions: "Do ye note
Of him behind, that what he touches moves?
So are not wont to do the feet of the dead." 82
And my good Leader, who was now before
His breast, where the two natures are conjoined,
Replied: "He is indeed alive and thus 85
Alone, I needs must show him the dark vale;
Necessity induces him, not joy.
From singing Alleluia One left off, 88
Who gave me this new task; he is no robber,
Neither am I a spirit fraudulent.
But by that Power, by which I move my steps 91
Along so wild a road, give unto us
Some one of thine, to whom we may keep close,
To show us where the ford is, and to carry 94
Upon his back this one who is not spirit
That he should make his passage through the air."
Upon his right breast Chiron bent around, 97
And said to Nessus: "Turn, and guide them so;
If other troops meet yours, make them keep off."
Then with the trusty escort we moved on, 100
Along the margin of the crimson boiling,
In which the boiled were uttering loud shrieks.
I saw a folk down in it to the brows, 103
And the great Centaur said: "Tyrants are these,
Who took to blood and plundering, and here
Lament their pitiless misdeeds; among them 106
Is Alexander, and fierce Dionysius
Who caused that Sicily had years of pain;
And yonder forehead that has such black hair 109
Is Azzolino's; and that one there, the blond,
Is Obizzo of Este, who in truth was quenched
Above there in the world by his step-son." 112

I then turned to the Poet, and he said:
"Let him be first to thee, and me be second."
A little further on the Centaur stopped
Above a folk, who far as to the throat
Seemed issuing from out the boiling stream.
Then at our side a solitary shade
He showed us, saying: "In God's bosom he
Did cleave the heart still honored on the Thames."
Then I saw folk, who forth from out the stream
Held up the head and all the chest beside;
And many a one of them I recognized.
In such a wise grew ever shallower
That blood, until it cooked only the feet;
And there, too, was our passage of the foss.
"As thou on this side seest the boiling stream
Go on continually diminishing,"
The Centaur said, "I will that thou believe
That on this other, more and more it lowers
Its bottom, till it comes again to where
It is assigned to tyranny to groan.
Justice divine here goads that Attila
Who was a scourge upon the earth; Pyrrhus
And Sextus; and eternally it milks
The tears which with the boiling it unlocks
From Rinier da Corneto, from Rinier Pazzo,
Who on the highways carried on such war."
Then he turned backward, and repassed the ford.

CANTO XIII

Not yet had Nessus come unto the bank
Upon the other side, when we went on
Within a wood, in which no path was marked.
Not leaves of green, but of a dusky hue;

Not branches smooth, but gnarled and intertwined;
Not any fruits were there, but poisoned thorns.
Not such rough thickets nor so dense belong
To those wild beasts who hate the places tilled
Between Corneto and the Cecina.
'Tis here the filthy Harpies make their nests,
Who drove the Trojans from the Strophades
With dismal presage of a coming harm.
Broad wings have they, and necks and faces human,
And feet with claws, and the great body feathered;
And on the strange trees utter their laments.
And the good Master then began to say:
"Before thou enter further know that thou
Art in the second round, and shalt be till
Thou shalt come out upon the horrid sands.
Therefore look well, and thou shalt see such things
As might rob words of mine of thy belief."
I could hear sounds of wailing, long drawn out
On every side, but saw no one to make them;
Wherefore, bewildered utterly, I stopped.
I think he thought that I was thinking then,
That all these voices from among the trunks
Came from a folk that was concealed from us.
Therefore the Master said: "If thou wilt break
From off one of these plants a little twig,
The thoughts thou hast will all be mutilated."
And then a little I stretched forth my hand,
And plucked a small branch from a great thorn tree;
And its trunk cried: "Why art thou rending me?"
When afterwards it had grown dark with blood,
It cried anew: "Why art thou tearing me?
Hast thou not any pity in thy spirit?
Men were we, and are now turned into stocks;
Thy hand should rightfully deserve to be

More pitiful, had we been serpents' souls."
As from a log that is green, which is on fire
At one of the ends, and at the other drips
And hisses with the escaping air; so from
That broken twig were issuing combined
Both words and blood; and therefore I let fall
The tip, and stood like one who is afraid.
"Had it been in his power to believe
At first, O wounded soul," replied my Sage,
"What he has seen but only in my verse,
Against thee he had not stretched forth his hand;
But the incredible condition made
Me prompt his doing that which weighs on me.
But tell him who thou wast, so that he may,
By way of some amends, refresh thy fame
On earth above, to which he can return." [me,
And the trunk said: "So with sweet speech thou lur'st
That I cannot be silent; and may it not
Offend you that I stick to talk a while.
I am the one within whose keeping were
Both keys of Frederick's heart, and them I turned
Both locking and unlocking softly, so
That from his secrets I kept out almost
All men; and to the glorious office brought
Such faith that I lost sleep and pulse thereby.
The harlot that from Caesar's dwelling-place
Did never turn away her strumpet eyes,—
The common death and vice of courts,—inflamed
Against me then the souls of every one;
And the inflamed inflamed Augustus so,
That my glad honors turned to dismal griefs.
My spirit, through disdainful taste, believing
That it by dying would escape disdain,
Made me unjust against my own just self.

And by the new roots of this tree I swear
To you, that I did never break my faith
To him, so worthy honor, and my lord.
If one of you should go back to the world,
Let him support my memory, which lies
Still prostrate from the blow that envy gave."
He paused a while, and then: "Since he is silent,"
The Poet said to me, "lose not the hour;
But, if more please thee, speak to him and ask."
Whence I to him: "Do thou still question him
Of what thou thinkst would satisfy my wish;
For I could not, such pity fills my heart."
So he began again: "So may the man
Do freely that which thy words ask, O soul
Incarcerated, may it please thee still
To tell us how the soul doth bind itself
Within these knots; and tell us, if thou canst,
If from these members one is ever loosed."
And then the trunk blew hard, and afterwards
That wind to these words was transformed:
"Briefly shall ye be answered. When the fierce
Spirit has taken its departure from
The body, whence itself has torn itself,
Minos doth send it to the seventh gulf.
It falls to the wood, not to a chosen spot,
But, wheresoever fortune flings it, there
It sprouts as would a grain of spelt; it shoots up
Into a sapling and a forest plant;
The Harpies, feeding then upon its leaves,
Give pain, and to the pain a window give.
We shall go like the others for our spoils,
But not that each one may reclothe himself;
For 'tis not just to have what one rejects.
We are to drag them hither, and all through

The mournful woods our bodies shall be hanged,
Each on the thorn-tree of its sore-vexed shade."
We were still there attentive to the trunk,
Thinking that it might wish to tell us more,
When lo! we were surprised by a great noise,
The same as he is, who feels coming on
The wild boar and the chase toward his post,
Who hears the beasts and branches as they crash.
And we beheld, upon the left hand, two,
Naked and torn, and in such headlong flight,
That they brake every barrier of the wood.
The one in front: "Now hasten, hasten, death!"
The other, who seemed to himself too slow,
Was crying: "Lano, not so nimble were
Thy legs when at Il Toppo in the jousts!"
And he, perchance because of failing breath,
Made of himself and of a bush a group.
Behind them was the forest full of bitches,
Black, ravenous, and running like grey-hounds
When they had been unleashed. Into the one
Who had just squatted down they set their teeth,
And him they lacerated, piece by piece;
Then carried off those miserable limbs.
My Guide then took me by the hand, and led
Me onward to the bush, whose plaint in vain
Was through the bleeding fractures issuing.
"O Jacomo," it cried, "da Sant' Andrea,
How helped it thee to make of me a screen?
What blame do I have of thy guilty life?"
When over it the Master came to stand,
He said: "Who wast thou, who dost now with blood
Blow through so many wounds such woful words?"
And that one said to us: "O souls that now
Have come to look upon the shameful havoc

That has so severed from me these my leaves,
Collect them at the foot of the wretched bush!
I was a citizen of her, who took
The Baptist in the place of her first patron;
Whence he will with his art e'er make her sad;
And were not at the Arno's passage still
Some semblance of him left, those citizens,
Who afterwards did build it up anew
Over the ashes left by Attila,
Would have put forth their toil in vain. I made
A gibbet for myself of my own house."

CANTO XIV

Because the love I bore my native place
Constrained me, I collected the strown leaves,
And gave them back to him now faint of voice.
Thence came we to the bound where separates
The third round from the second; where is seen
A mode of justice that is horrible.
Duly to manifest the novel things
I say that we had reached a barren plain,
Which from its bed doth every plant reject.
The woful wood was round about it like
A garland, as the sad foss was to that;
We stayed our steps here on the very edge.
The floor was made of arid and dense sand
Not otherwise in fashion than was that
Which formerly was trodden by Cato's feet.
Vengeance of God! oh, how thou shouldst be held
In fear by every one of those who read
That which was manifested to my eyes!
Many a flock I saw of naked souls

Who all were weeping in great wretchedness;
And on each seemed imposed a special law.
For some of them were lying on the ground,
Supine, and some were seated all crouched up,
And others went about continually.
Those that went round were far more numerous;
And those were less who lay down to the pain,
But had their tongues loosed to a greater grief.
O'er the whole waste of sand, falling slowly,
Were raining down dilated flakes of fire,
As those of snow on alps without a wind.
Like to the flames which Alexander saw
In those hot parts of India to fall
Unbroken to the ground about his host,
Whereat he took good care to have his troops
Trample the soil, because the vapor thus
Could be the better quenched while single still;
So was descending the eternal heat;
With which the sand was kindled, as the tinder
Beneath the steel, for doubling of the pain.
Without reposing ever was the dance
Of the afflicted hands, now here, now there,
With shaking the fresh burning from themselves.
"Master," began I, "thou who conquerest
All things, save the hard demons who came forth
Against us at the entrance of the gate,
Who is that great one, who seems not to heed
The fire, and lies disdainful and awry,
So that the rain seems not to ripen him?"
And he himself, who had observed that I
Was asking of my Guide concerning him,
Cried: "What I was in life, that am I dead.
Though Jove should weary his smith out, from whom
He took in anger the sharp thunderbolt

That I was smitten with on my last day,
Or wearied he the others, turn by turn,
At the black forge in Mongibello, crying,
'Good Vulcan, help me, help me!' even as
He acted when in the Phlegraean fight,
And should he hurl with all his might at me,
He could not get thereby joyful revenge."
Then spoke my Guide with such a vehemence
As I had never heard him use before:
"O Capaneus, in that thy haughtiness
Is not extinguished, thou art punished more;
No torment could there be, save thine own rage,
That were a pain proportioned to thy fury."
Then with a better countenance he turned
To me, and said: "One of the seven kings
Besieging Thebes was he; he held, and holds,
It seems, God in disdain, and prizes Him
But little, seems it; but, as I did tell him,
His scorn is his breast's fittest ornament.
But come behind me, and take care that still
Upon the scorched sand thou put not thy feet,
But keep them ever close beside the wood."
Silent we reached a place where gushes forth
Out of the wood a little rivulet,
Of which the redness makes me shudder still.
As from the Bulicame comes a stream
Which sinful women share among them then,
So this was flowing down across the sand.
Its bed and both its sloping banks had turned
To stone, and, too, the margins on each side,
Whence I perceived our way across was there.
"Among all else that I have shown to thee
Since we did make our entrance through the gate,
Of which the threshold is denied to none,

There has been nothing by thine eyes discerned
So notable as is this present stream,
Which deadens all the little flames above it."
These words were of my Leader; wherefore I
Besought him that he would bestow the food,
Of which he had bestowed on me desire.
"In mid-sea lies a devastated land,"
Then answered he, "of which the name is Crete,
Under whose king the olden world was chaste.
A mountain is there, which formerly was glad
With waters and with leaves, Ida its name;
Now it is desert like a thing outworn.
Rhea of old chose it to be her son's
Cradle secure; and to conceal him better,
When he would weep, would have cries uttered there.
Within the mountain stands a great old man,
Who holds his shoulders turned towards Damietta,
And as into his mirror looks at Rome.
His head is fashioned of fine gold; his arms
And breast are of pure silver; then as far
As to the fork he is of brass; from there
Downward he is all chosen iron, save
That his right foot is of baked earth; on this one
More than upon the other stands he straight.
And every part, excepting that of gold,
Is broken with a fissure that drips tears,
Which, gathered, through that cavern make their way.
They flow from rock to rock down to this vale;
Acheron, Styx and Phlegethon they form;
Then through this narrow channel they go down
To where there is no more descending; there
They form Cocytus; and what that pool is
Thou shalt behold, as here it is not told."
And I to him: "If this stream present now

Is flowing downward thus from our world, why
Appears it to us only on this border?"
And he to me: "The place is circular,
Thou knowest, and although thou hast come far,
E'er by the left descending toward the bottom,
Through the whole circle thou hast not yet turned;
So, if a novel thing appears to us,
It ought not to bring wonder to thy face."
And I again: "Master, where are they found,
Lethe and Phlegethon? for thou say'st naught
Of one, and that the other this rain forms."
"In all thy questions," answered he, "in truth
Thou pleasest me; but the red water's boiling
Might well have solved one that thou askest now.
Lethe shalt thou behold,—but not within
This foss,—where souls do go to lave themselves
When guilt repented of has been removed."
Then said he: "Now it is time that we should leave
The wood behind; see that thou follow me;
The margins, which burn not, afford a way,
And every vapor over them is quenched."

CANTO XV

Now one of the hard margins bears us on;
And overhead the brook's steam made such shade
As saves the water and the banks from fire.
As do the Flemings 'twixt Wissant and Bruges,
Fearing the flood that comes toward them rushing,
Who make the bulwark that the sea may flee;
And as the Paduans along the Brenta,
To give their towns and castles a defence,
Or ever Chiarentana feel the heat,

In fashion similar had these been made,
Though they were not so high nor yet so thick
Made by the master, whosoe'er he was.
Already were we so far from the wood,
That I could not have seen then where it was
Although I had turned backward, when we met
A troop of souls now coming alongside
The bank; and each was looking so at us
As in the evening men are wont to look
At one another under the new moon;
And they were sharpening their brows toward us,
As an old tailor at his needle's eye.
I was thus peered at by that company
When I was recognized by one, who seized
My garment's hem, and cried: "What a marvel this!"
And I, when he stretched out his arm to me,
So fixed my eyes on his baked aspect, that
The scorching of his visage hindered not
The recognition of him by my mind;
And bending down my own toward his face,
I answered him: "Are you here, Ser Brunetto?"
And he: "My son, oh, let it not displease thee
If Brunetto Latini a little while
Turns back with thee, and lets the train go on."
I said to him: "With all my might I beg you;
And if you will that I sit down with you,
I will, if it please him with whom I go."
"O Son," said he, "whoever of this herd
Stops for an instant, lies a hundred years
Thereafter, nor can fan himself from fire
That smites him. So, go on; I at thy skirts
Will come and afterwards rejoin my band,
Which goes lamenting endless penalties."
I dared not go down from the road to walk

Upon his level, but I held my head
Bent down, as one who goes in reverent mood.
"What fortune or what destiny," began he,
"Before the last day brings thee here below?
And who is this one who points out the way?"
"Up there in the bright life," I answered him,
"I went astray while in a valley, ere
My age was full, and only in the morn
Of yesterday turned I my back on it;
This one appeared to me then into it
Regressing, and now leads me home this way."
And he to me: "If thou thy star wilt follow,
Thou canst not fail to reach the glorious port,
If in the fair life I discerned aright;
And if I had not met my death so soon,
Seeing the heavens so full of grace for thee
I would have given thee comfort at the work.
But that ungrateful and malignant folk,
That from Fiesole came down of old,
And still keeps somewhat of the hills and rocks,
Will grow thine enemy, for thy good deeds;
And it is right, for 'mid harsh sorb-trees 'twere
Not seemly the sweet fig-tree should bear fruit.
Old fame in the world proclaims them to be blind,
A people avaricious, envious, proud;
From their ways see that thou do cleanse thyself.
Thy fortune has in store for thee such honor,
That both sides will be hungering for thee;
But far off from the goat shall be the grass.
Let then the beasts, come from Fiesole,
Make litter of themselves, nor touch the plant,
If one upon their dung-heap still should rise,
In which should live again the holy seed
Of those from Rome, who had remained, when there

Was made the nest of so much wickedness."
"If my request were perfectly fulfilled," 79
I answered him, "you would not yet have been
From human nature put to banishment;
For in my mind is fixed, and my heart knows, 82
The dear and kindly picture of you as
A father, when on earth from hour to hour
You taught me how man makes himself eternal; 85
In what esteem I hold it, whilst I live
It is fitting in my speech should be discerned.
That which you tell me of my course, I write, 88
And keep it to be glossed with other text
By one, a Lady, who will understand,
If I attain to her. Thus much would I 91
Have plain to you: if conscience chide me not,
For Fortune as she will I am prepared.
Such earnest is not novel to my ears; 94
Wherefore let Fortune ply her wheel, e'en as
It pleases her, and every boor his hoe."
My Master thereupon toward his right 97
Turned backward, and his eyes were fixed on me;
Then said: "Well does he listen who takes heed."
Not less for this I go on talking still 100
With Ser Brunetto, and I ask who are
The best of his companions and best known.
And he to me: "It is good to know of some; 103
As for the rest, it will be laudable
If we be silent, for the time were short
For so much speech. Know then, in brief, that all 106
Were clerks and scholars great and of great fame,
And by one self-same sin on earth defiled.
Priscian is going with that wretched crowd, 109
And Francesco d'Accorso; and besides,
If thou hadst had a hankering for such scurf,

Thou couldst have seen there him who was transferred
From Arno by the servant of the servants
To Bacchiglione where he left behind
His ill-strained nerves; and I would tell of more,
But to go, talking, may no longer be.
For I see there new smoke rise from the sand.
People come now with whom I must not be;
Permit my 'Treasure' in which I still live
To be commended to thee; more I ask not."
Then he turned back, and seemed as one of those
Who at Verona run the green cloth race
Over the open field; and seemed of these
The one who wins and not the one who loses.

CANTO XVI

I NOW was where I heard the hollow sound
Of the water to the other circle falling,
Like to that humming which the bee-hives make,
When lo! three shades together came away,
As they were running from a band that now
Was passing, 'neath the bitter torment's rain.
They came toward us and each was crying out:
"Stop, thou who by thy garb seemest to us
To be some one from our own wicked land."
Ah me! upon their limbs what wounds I saw
Recent and old burnt in by the flames! and still
I grieve for them, when I but think of it.
My Teacher gave attention to their cries,
And turned his face toward me, and said: "Now wait;
To these it is due that we be courteous;
And if it were not the nature of the place
To dart the fire, then I should say that haste

To thee were more becoming than to them."
And they began again, as we stood still,
The ancient verse; and when they had reached us
All three of them made of themselves a wheel.
As champions wont to do, naked and oiled,
Watching for hold and vantage ere they come
Together to deliver blows and thrusts;
Thus wheeling, each one held his face toward me
So that the neck continually turned
In opposite direction from the feet.
"Ah! if the wretchedness of this soft place
Should bring us and our prayers into contempt,"
Began one, "and our aspect stained and flayed,
May that fame which is ours incline thy mind
To tell us who thou art, that so secure
Dost rub with living feet the ways of hell.
He in whose footsteps thou dost see me tread,
Though he go naked and deprived of skin,
Was of a higher rank than thou mayst think.
He was a grandson of the good Gualdrada;
His name was Guido Guerra; and in his life
He wrought much both with wisdom and with sword.
The other who behind me treads the sand
Is Tegghiaio Aldobrandi, whose good name
Should be esteemed up yonder in the world.
And I who am placed with them on the cross
Was Iacopo Rusticucci, and surely
My savage wife hurts me beyond all else."
If I had been protected from the fire,
I should have cast me down into their midst;
I think my Teacher would have suffered it.
But as I should have been both burned and baked,
Fear overcame the good will that I had,
Which made me yearn to clasp them in my arms.

Then I began: "It was sorrow, not contempt,
So firmly fixed within me by your state
That it will be long hence ere I shall be
Divested of it all, as soon as this
My Lord spoke words by which I was aware
That those were coming of your quality.
Of your own land am I, and at all times
Your deeds and honored names with loving pride
Have I recounted and have listened to.
Leaving the gall, I go on for sweet fruits
Promised to me by my veracious Guide;
But to the centre first I needs must fall."
"So may the soul long be the guide within
Thy limbs," replied he then, "and after thee
So may thy fame shine forth, tell us if still
Valor and courtesy abide within
Our city so as they were wont to do,
Or have departed from it utterly?
For Guglielmo Borsiere, lately come
To share our pain,—he yonder with the rest,—
Afflicts us sorely with his words on that."
"New families and sudden gains have bred,
Florence, in thee, such pride and such excess,
That thou already sheddest tears therefor."
Thus with my face uplifted, I cried out;
The three, who took this for an answer, looked
At one another, as when men hear truth.
"If at so slight expense at other times
Thou satisfiest others," all replied,
"Happy art thou, if so thou speak at will.
So, if escaping these dark regions, thou
Return to see the beauty of the stars,
And thou shalt say, rejoicing: 'I have been,'
See that unto the folk thou speak of us."

And thereupon they broke apart the wheel,
And as they fled their nimble legs seemed wings.
It were not possible to say Amen
As quickly then as they had disappeared;
Wherefore it pleased the Master to depart.
I followed him, and we had gone but little
Before the sound of water was so near,
That we, if speaking, could have scarce been heard.
So as that river, which first keeps a path
Its own, from Monte Viso toward the east,
Upon the left flank of the Appenine,—
Which is called Acquacheta up above,
Ere it go valley-ward to its low bed,
And at Forlì is lacking of that name,—
Goes sounding there above San Benedetto
Dell' Alpe, falling in a single leap
Where by a thousand it should be received;
Thus downward from a bank precipitous
We found that the stained water sounded so
As would have stunned our ears in little time.
I had a cord that was around me girt,
And with it I aforetime had in mind
To take the leopardess of the painted skin.
When, as my Leader had commanded me,
I had completely loosed it from myself,
I reached it to him, knotted and coiled up.
And thereupon he turned him toward the right
And at some little distance from the edge
He cast it down into that deep abyss.
"Surely some novelty must correspond,"
Said I within myself, "to this new signal,
Which with his eye my Master follows so."
Ah, how great caution is befitting men
Who are near those that see not deeds alone



But with their wisdom look within the thoughts!
He said to me: "What I await shall soon
Come up, and what thy thought is dreaming of
Must soon disclose itself unto thy view."
Always to such a truth as has the look
Of falsehood, one should close his lips with all
His might, lest faultless he be put to shame;
But here I can not hold my peace, and by
The verses of this Comedy I swear
To thee, O reader,—so may they not lack
Long favor,—that I saw, through that gross air
And dark, come swimming up a shape, that were
A thing of wonder to each steadfast heart;
Even so returns he who goes down at times
To loose an anchor grappling either rock
Or somewhat else that in the sea is hid,
Who upward stretches and draws up his feet.

CANTO XVII

"Behold the wild beast with the pointed tail,
That passes mountains, breaks down walls and arms;
Behold the one infecting all the world."
My Leader thus began to speak to me;
And beckoned him that he should come to shore
Near where the marbles walked on come to end;
And he, of Fraud the loathsome image, came
Along, and landed there his head and bust,
But on the bank he drew not up his tail.
His face was as the face of a just man,
Of such benignity its outward skin,
And all his trunk besides was serpent-like.
Two paws he had, covered with hair as far

As to the arm-pits; back and breast and both
His sides had painted on them knots and wheels;
With more of color, groundwork and relief,
Cloth ne'er was made by Tartar nor by Turk;
Such webs Arachne never laid on loom.
As sometimes boats are at the shore, and lie
In water partly, partly on the land;
As in yon lands of German gluttony
The beaver doth adjust himself to wage
His war; so lay that worst of beasts upon
The edge that closes in the sand with stone.
And all his tail was quivering in the void
And twisting upward the empoisoned fork
Which armed the tip, as with the scorpion.
The Leader said: "It is now needful that
Our way should bend itself a little space
Toward the wicked beast that couches there."
So we descended on the right-hand side
And took ten steps upon the very edge,
Thus surely to avoid the sand and flames.
And when we had come to him I behold
A little further on upon the sand
People that sit near to the empty place.
The Master hereupon said unto me:
"That thou mayst carry hence completely full
Experience of this round, go view their state.
Thy conversation yonder be but brief;
Till thou return, with this one I will speak,
That his strong shoulders may be granted us."
Thus, still along upon the outer side
Of this the seventh circle, all alone
I went to where the wretched people sat.
Their grief was bursting forth from out their eyes;
This side, that side, they used their hands to help

Now 'gainst the vapors, now 'gainst burning soil.
The dogs in summer do not otherwise,
Using the muzzle now and now the foot,
When gadflies, fleas, or flies have bitten them.
When on the face of certain ones my eyes
I fixed, on whom the grievous fire was falling,
Not one I recognized; but I observed
From each one's neck there hung a pouch, which had
A certain color and a certain mark,
And thereupon their eyes appeared to feed.
And as I looked, coming into their midst,
Upon a purse of yellow, I could see
Azure, which had a lion's face and bearing.
The current of my look proceeding, next
I saw another one of them blood-red,
Display a goose, whiter than butter is.
And one who had his little white sack marked
With figure of an azure, pregnant sow,
Said unto me: "What doest thou in this ditch?
Now go thy way; since thou art still alive
Know that Vitaliano shall sit here—
He was my neighbor—at my left-hand side.
Of Florence these; I am of Padua;
Often they stun my ears with crying out:
'May that one come, the sovereign cavalier, [screwed
Who will bring the three-beaked pouch.'" And then he
His mouth awry, and outward thrust his tongue,
As does the ox whene'er he licks his nose.
And I, who feared lest further stay might grieve
Him who enjoined me to make brief my stay,
Turned me, and left the weary souls behind.
I found my Leader, who was mounted now
Upon the croup of the fierce animal;
He said to me: "Now be thou strong and bold;

Henceforward the descent is by such stairs.
Mount thou in front; for I will be between,
In order that the tail may not do harm."
As one who has the quartan shivering fit
So near that pale already are his nails,
All trembling for mere looking at the shade,
Such at these uttered words did I become;
But his reproofs caused me such shame as makes
A servant strong in a kind master's sight.
On those huge shoulders I arranged myself.
"So do," I wished to say, but as I thought
The voice came not, "that thine arms clasp me round."
But he, who was my help another time,
In other hazard, soon as I was up
Clasped me, sustaining me within his arms;
And said: "Now move thee, Geryon, and be
Thy circles wide, and slow thy going down;
Think of the novel burden that thou hast."
And as the little vessel from its place
Goes backward, backward, so did he draw thence;
And when he felt that he was all in play,
To where his breast had been he turned his tail,
And moved it stretched out like an eel; and with
His paws he gathered to himself the air.
I do not think that there was greater fear
When Phaëthon let go the reins, whereby
The heaven, as still is evident, was burned;
Nor when the wretched Icarus perceived
His loins unfeathered with the melted wax,
His father crying to him: "A wrong course
Thou holdest!" than was mine, when on all sides
I saw myself in air, and saw cut off
The sight of everything except the beast.
As swimming slowly, slowly, it moves on,

It wheels descending, but I note it not,
Except for wind in face and from below.
Now at the right hand I could hear the rapids
Making beneath us noises horrible;
And so with downward gaze stretch out my head.
Then had I more dread of the precipice,
For I saw fires, and heard laments, whereat
I trembling shrank back, wholly cowering.
And I saw then,—for I could not before,—
The sinking and the wheeling by the ills
That, great, were drawing near on divers sides.
As when the falcon, long upon the wing,
That without sight of lure or bird has caused
The falconer to cry, "Ah me, thou stoopest now!"
Descends in weariness whence it moved swift
With hundred wheelings, and alights far off,—
Disdainful, sullen,—from its master's place;
So at the bottom Geryon set us
Beside the very foot of that rough rock,
And, as our bodies burdened him no more,
Sped fast away, as arrow-notch from string.

CANTO XVIII

There is a place in hell called Malebolge,
Wholly of stone and of an iron color,
As is the wall encircling it about.
Right in the midst of the malignant field
There yawns a pit, exceeding wide and deep,
Whose ordering I will in due time tell.
The belt, then, that remains is round, between
The foot of that high, hard bank and the pit,
Its bed divided into valleys ten.

As, where for the protection of the walls
Castles are girt with very many moats,
The ground where they are is configured, such
The picture was that these presented here.
As from the thresholds of such fortresses
Are little bridges to the outer bank,
So from the bottom of the cliff ran crags
That crossed the banks and moats down to the pit,
Which terminates and takes them to itself.
This was the place where, shaken from the back
Of Geryon, we found ourselves; to the left
The Poet kept, and I moved on behind.
On the right hand I saw new piteous sights,
New torments and new wielders of the scourge;
And the first bolgia is replete with them.
The sinners at its bottom were unclad;
This side the middle they came facing us;
Beyond, with us although with greater steps.
So they of Rome, because of the great host
The year of Jubilee, upon the bridge
Devised a way to have the people pass,
So that on one side all are facing toward
The castle, going to Saint Peter's, while
Those on the other rim go toward the mount.
This side and that along the gloomy rock
Horned demons with great scourges I beheld,
Who from behind them beat them cruelly.
And oh, how they were making them lift up
Their heels at the first blows! Truly not one
Was waiting for the second or the third!
While I was going on my eyes were met
By one, and I upon the instant said:
"The sight of him before now I lack not."
So, to make out his form, I stayed my feet,

And also the sweet Leader stopped with me,
And granted that I go a little back.
And that scourged one thought to conceal himself
By lowering his face, but that availed
Him little, for I said: "Thou, who dost cast
Thine eye to earth, if thy face be not false,
Venedico Caccianimico art;
But what brings thee to Salse that sting so?"
And he to me: "Unwillingly I tell it,
But I am forced to it by thy clear speech,
Which makes me call to mind the world of old.
I am the one who Ghisolabella led
Unto the doing of the Marquis' will,
However may be told the shameful tale.
I weep here, not the only Bolognese;
Nay, this place is so full of them, that not
'Twixt Reno and Savena fewer tongues
Learn to say *sipa;* and if thou of this
Wilt have assurance or an evidence,
Recall to mind our avaricious breasts."
Him speaking thus a demon with his scourge
Smote, as he said: "Away, thou pander! Here
There are no women to be turned to coin!"
My escort I rejoined, and thereupon
With but a few steps taken we had come
To where a crag was jutting from the bank.
This we ascended very easily,
And, turning to the right upon its ridge,
From these eternal circles moved away.
When we had come to that point where it yawns
Beneath it to give passage to the scourged,
The Leader said: "Wait, and let strike on thee
Sight of those others, ill-born, of whom yet
Thou has not seen the faces, inasmuch

As they with us have gone along together."
From the old bridge we looked upon the line
Coming toward us on the other side,
And which the scourge was likewise driving on.
Without my asking the good Master said:
"Look at that great one who is coming, and
Who seems not for his pain to shed a tear.
What aspect of a king he still retains!
It is Jason, who by courage and by wit
Deprived the Colchians of the ram. The isle
Of Lemnos was upon his way, where erst
The women, in their boldness pitiless,
Had given over all their males to death.
It was there with tokens and with ornate words
He did deceive Hypsipyle, the maid,
Who all the other women first deceived.
He left her there with child and lonely; such
A fault condemns him to such suffering;
And for Medea too is vengeance taken.
With him goes whoso in such wise deceives;
And let this be enough to know of this
First valley, and of those within its fangs."
We were already where the narrow path,
Crossing the next embankment, makes
Of that abutments for another arch.
We heard from there people who whine within
The next pouch, and are puffing with their muzzles,
The while they beat themselves with their own palms.
The banks were all encrusted with a mould
From breath, that from below adhered to them
And quarreled with the eyes and with the nose.
The bottom was so dark and deep, no place
Sufficed for us to see it, unless we mounted
The arch's crown where highest rose the crag.

Hither we came, and thence down in the ditch
I looked on people plunged into a filth
That seemed from human privies to have come.
And while my eyes were searching there below,
I saw one with his head so foul with ordure
That were he clerk or layman appeared not.
He shouted to me: "Why so greedy thou
To look at me more than at others foul?"
And I to him: "Because, if I recall
Aright, ere now I have seen thee with dry hair;
Thou art Alessio Interminei of Lucca;
I therefore eye thee more than all the rest."
And then he said, beating his pate meanwhile:
"Down here have made me sink the flatteries
With which my tongue was never surfeited."
"Strive," said my Leader thereupon to me,
"To thrust thy look a little further on,
So that thou mayst attain well with thine eyes
The face of that unclean, disheveled wench,
Who there doth scratch herself with her foul nails,
And crouches now, and now is on her feet.
Thais it is, the harlot, who replied
Unto her paramour, when he had said,
'Have I great thanks from thee?'—'Nay, marvelous!'
And herewith let our sight be satisfied."

CANTO XIX

O Simon Magus, O ye miserable
Followers, who the things of God, that should
Be brides of righteousness,—and plunderers ye!—
For silver and for gold do prostitute,
Now it is meet the trumpet sound for you,
Because in the third bolgia is your place!

We were already at the following tomb,
Mounted to that part of the crag which hangs
Over the very middle of the ditch.
O most high Wisdom, how great art Thou showest
In heaven, in earth, and in the évil world,
And with what justice doth Thy Power allot!
Upon the bottom and upon the sides
I saw the livid stone was full of holes,
All of one size, and each was circular.
They seemed to me not larger nor less wide
Than those which in my beautiful Saint John
Are made for stands for the baptizing priests.
Not many years since one of these I broke
Because of someone perishing therein;
Be this a seal to undeceive all men.
Forth from the mouth of each projecting were
A sinner's feet, and of his legs as far
As to the calf; the rest remained within.
The soles of all were, both of them, on fire;
Wherefore so powerfully twitched their joints, [grass.
They would have snapped green withes and ropes of
Just as the flaming of things oiled is wont
To move upon the outer surface only,
Likewise was it with these from heels to toes.
"Who is that, Master, who torments himself,
And twitches more than the others of like fate,"
Said I: "and whom a ruddier flame is sucking?"
And he to me: "If thou wilt that I bear thee
Down there, by that more sloping bank, from him
Thou shalt learn of himself and of his wrongs."
And I: "Whate'er thou wilt, to me is good.
Thou art my lord, and knowest that from thy will
I part me not, and knowest what I say not."
Then to the fourth embankment come, we turned

And went down at the left hand there below
Into the narrow bottom pierced with holes.
Me the good Master from his hip not yet
Set down, till he had brought me to the cleft
Of him who so lamented with his shanks.
"Whoe'er thou art that hast thine upper part
Beneath, O sad soul, planted like a stake,"
Began I saying, "if thou art able, speak."
I stood there like the friar who confesses
The treacherous assassin, who, e'en fixed,
Recalls him and thereby retards his death;
And he cried out: "Stand'st thou already there?
Stand'st thou already there, O Boniface?
By several years the writing lied to me.
Art thou so quickly sated with that wealth,
For which thou didst not fear to seize by guile
The Lady beautiful, and afterwards
To outrage her?" Such I became as those
Who stand, not grasping a reply to them,
Mocked as it were, nor can themselves reply.
Then Virgil said: "Say to him quickly, I
Am not the one, am not the one thou thinkest."
And I replied as was enjoined on me.
Whereat with all his might the spirit writhed
His feet; then sighing and with tearful voice
Said to me: "Thou, what askest thou of me?
If to know who I am thou care so much
That thou hast for that cause come down the bank,
Know that with the Great Mantle I was vested.
And verily I was the She-bear's son,
So eager to advance the whelps, I put
Up yonder wealth, and here myself, in purse.
Beneath my head the others are dragged down
Who had preceded me in simony,

Now flattened through the fissures of the rock.
Down thither shall I likewise fall whene'er
That one shall come whom I believed thou wast,
When I did put the question suddenly.
But for a longer time already I
Have baked my feet and been inverted thus
Than he is to stay planted with red feet;
For after him shall come, of uglier deed,
Out of the west a shepherd without law
Such as befits to cover him and me.
Jason shall live again, of whom men read
In Maccabees; and as to him was pliant
His king, so who rules France shall be to him."
I know not if I was in this too rash
In that I answered him in just this strain:
"Ah, tell me now how great the treasure was
Our Lord required of Saint Peter ere
He put the keys into his custody?
Naught, certainly, except: 'Follow thou me!'
Nor of Matthias asked Peter and the rest
Silver or gold, when he was chosen by lot
To take the place the guilty soul had lost.
Therefore stay thou, for thou art punished well;
And keep thou well the ill-acquired coin,
Which against Charles caused thee to be so bold.
And were I not prevented from it still
By reverence for the keys that are supreme,
Which in the joyful life thou hadst in keeping,
I should make use of words still heavier;
Because your avarice afflicts the world,
Raising the bad and trampling on the good.
Of you as shepherds thought the Evangelist
When she, who on the waters has her seat,
Was seen by him to fornicate with kings;

The one that with the seven heads was born
  And from the ten horns had authority
  As long as virtue to her spouse was pleasing.
Of gold and silver have ye made your god;
  And what else parts you from idolaters,
  Save that they one, and ye a hundred worship?
Ah, Constantine, of how much ill was mother
  Not thy conversion, but that gift of thine,
  Which the first father to be rich received!"
And while I sang to him such notes as these,
  Whether it was conscience gnawing him or rage,
  He ceased not kicking hard with both his feet.
I believe truly that it pleased my Leader,
  He listened on with such contented look,
  Hearing the sound of the true words expressed.
Therefore he took me with both arms, and when
  He had me wholly on his breast, remounted
  Along the way by which he had come down;
Nor wearied he of keeping me so clasped,
  But bore me to the summit of the arch,
  The crossing from the fourth bank to the fifth.
And here he gently set his burden down;
  Gently upon the rock so rough and steep,
  It were a passage hard for goats; and thence
Another deep vale was to me discovered.

CANTO XX

Of a new punishment must I make verses
  And give material to the twentieth canto
  Of the first song, which is of the submerged.
I was, as far as might be, now all placed
  To gaze down into the discovered depth,
  Which tears of anguish bathed; and I beheld

People along the round of that great vale
Come silent and in tears at such a pace
As in this world the litanies maintain.
And, as my sight went lower down on them,
Each one appeared distorted wondrously
Between the chin and where the chest begins;
For toward the reins the face was turned about,
And to move backwards now they were compelled,
For they had been deprived of forward sight.
By force of palsy, it may be, some one
Ere now has been thus twisted utterly,
But I have not seen it, nor believe in it.
So may God let thee, reader, gather fruit
From what thou readest, think now for thyself
How I was able to keep dry my face,
When near at hand the image of ourselves
I saw so twisted that the weeping eyes
Did bathe the hinder parts along the cleft!
Surely I wept, leaning against a rock
Of the hard stone, so that my Escort said:
"Art thou even yet among the other fools?
Here pity lives when it is truly dead.
Who is more criminal than he who feels
In the presence of God's judgment passionate?
Lift up thy head, lift up, and see for whom
The earth did open in the Thebans' sight,
Whereat they all cried, 'Whither fallest thou,
Amphiaraus? Why dost leave the war?'
And he ceased not from falling headlong down
To Minos, who lays hold on every one.
Lo, of his shoulders he has made a breast;
Because he wished to see too far before him,
Backward he looks, and goes a backward path.
Behold Tiresias, who changed his semblance,

When from a male a female he became,
Changing his members every one; and then
It was first needful that he strike again
The two entwinèd serpents with the rod,
Ere he resume the plumage of a male.
Aruns is he with back to this one's belly,
Who in Lunigian mountains, on which works
The Carrarese who has his home below,
Amid the marble's whiteness had the cave
For his abode; whence gazing at the stars,
Or out to sea, his view was not cut off.
And that one who, with tresses unconfined
Covers her breasts, which are unseen by thee,
And has on that side all her hairy skin,
Was Manto, who had searched through many lands,
Then settled there where I was born; whereof
It pleases me that thou shouldst hear a while.
After her father had from life departed
And Bacchus' city came to be enslaved,
She for a long time roamed about the world.
Up in fair Italy there lies a lake,
Benaco named, and at the foot of alps
That shut in Germany above the Tyrol.
A thousand springs, I think, and more 'twixt Garda
And Val Camonica bathe Apennino
With water which in that lake comes to rest.
A place is in the middle there, where might
The Trentine pastor, that of Brescia, or
Verona's bless, if he should pass that way.
Peschiera sits, a fortress fair and strong,
To front the Brescians and the Bergamasks,
There where the shore is lowest round about.
What in Benaco's bosom may not bide
Must wholly thence pour forth, and make itself

A river downward through green pasture-lands.
Soon as the water gathers head to flow,
It is no more Benaco called, but Mincio
Down to Governo where it joins the Po.
It flows not far before it finds a plain,
In which it spreads, making a swamp, and wont
In summer to be noisome now and then.
Passing that way the cruel virgin saw
Land in the middle of the fen, that showed
No tilth and of inhabitants was bare;
There, to avoid all human fellowship,
Stayed with her servants, practising her arts,
And lived, and left her body empty there.
Later the men, who round about were scattered,
Collected at that place, and it was strong
By reason of the marsh on every side.
They built the city over those dead bones;
And for the one who first did choose the place,
Mantua called it without other lot.
The population once was denser there
Ere Casalodi through stupidity
Had lost his rights by Pinamonte's guile.
Therefore I tell thee, shouldst thou ever hear
My city given other origin,
So that no falsehood may defraud the truth."
And I: "Master, thy discourse is to me
So certain, and takes such hold on my faith,
That others' would be to me coals burnt out.
But tell me of the people moving on,
If thou seest anyone worthy of note;
Because to that alone my mind reverts."
Then said he to me: "He who from his cheeks
Stretches his beard over his dusky shoulders,
Was once, when Greece was so devoid of males,

Scarcely were any for the cradles left,
  An augur; and with Calchas fixed the moment
  When the first cable should be cut at Aulis.
He was Eurypylus; of him so-named
  My lofty Tragedy in some place sings;
  Well thou knowest this, who knowest the whole of it.
That other one, who is about the flanks
  So slight, was Michael Scot; and verily
  He understood the play of magic frauds.
Behold Guido Bonatti, behold Asdente,
  Who now would wish he had attended to
  His thread and leather, but repents too late.
Behold the wretched women who left needle,
  Shuttle and spindle, fortune-tellers grown,
  And working spells with herbs and images.
But come now, for already with his thorns,
  Cain holds the confines of both hemispheres,
  And below Seville touches now the wave.
And yesternight the moon was round already;
  That must thou well remember, for one time
  In the deep wood she did not do thee harm."
Thus spoke he to me, and we walked meanwhile.

CANTO XXI

From bridge to bridge, talking of other things
  Of which my comedy cares not to sing,
  Thus we came on, and held the summit, when
We stopped to see of Malebolge's clefts
  The next, and the next lamentations vain;
  And wonderfully dark I saw it was.
As boils in the Venetians' arsenal
  In winter the tenacious pitch, to pay
  Their unsound ships that they can sail no more,

And in their stead, one makes him a new ship,
Another caulks the ribs of one which had
Made many voyages; one at the prow
Is hammering, another at the stern;
One twisting cordage, and one making oars;
And one is patching sails, foresail and main:
So, not by fire but by some art divine
There was a thick pitch boiling there below,
That smeared the bank like glue on every side.
Itself I saw, but saw within it naught
But bubbles that the boiling caused to rise,
The whole now swollen, now settled back compressed.
While I was gazing down there fixedly,
My Leader, saying, "Beware, beware!" drew me
Up to himself from that place where I stood.
Then I turned round as one who longs to see
The thing from which he is obliged to fly,
And whom a sudden fear robs of his strength,
So that to see he tarries not, but starts;
And saw behind us that a devil, black,
Was coming, running up along the rock.
Ah, in his aspect what ferocity!
How bitter he appeared to me in act,
With wings outspread, and light upon his feet!
Upon his shoulder, which was sharp and high,
A sinner with both haunches was the load,
And of his feet he held the sinews clutched.
"O Malebranche," said he from our bridge,
"Here is one of Santa Zita's ancients; put thou him
Under, for I am going back for more,
To that town I have stocked so well with them.
There, save Bonturo, all are barrators.
A No for money there is made a Yes."
Down there he hurled him, and turned back along

The hard rock; and a mastiff loosed was ne'er
In such a haste to follow up a thief.
That one sank under; then rose, doubled up.
The demons, though, that had the bridge for cover,
Cried: "Here the holy face is not in place;
The swimming here is not as in the Serchio;
Therefore, unless thou longest for our hooks,
Come not above the surface of the pitch."
Then with a hundred prongs and more they struck him,
And said: "It is well that thou dance covered here,
So that thou thieve in secret, if thou canst."
Not otherwise cooks have their scullions plunge
The meat into the middle of the pot
With hooks, in order that it may not float.
And the good Master said to me: "So that
It may not seem that thou art here, squat down
Behind a crag, and so have thee a screen.
And whatsoe'er offence be done to me,
Have thou no fear, for I know these things well,
As in such contest I have been ere now."
Then he passed on, beyond the bridge's head;
And as he reached the bank that was the sixth,
Then he had need to have a steadfast front.
With that rage and with that tempestuousness
With which the dogs rush forth on the poor man
Who of a sudden begs where he has stopped,
These issued forth from 'neath the little bridge,
And turned against him all their grappling-hooks;
But he cried out: "Let none of you be harmful!
Before your hook takes hold of me, let one
Come forward from among you, and give ear,
And then devise as to your grappling me."
They all cried out: "Let Malacoda go!"
Whereat one moved, the others standing firm,

And came to him, saying: "How helps it him?"
"Dost thou think, Malacoda, that thou seest
Me coming hither," said my Master, "safe
Already from all hindrances of yours,
Without intent divine and favoring fate?
Let me go on, for it is willed in heaven
That I shall show another this wild road."
Then was his arrogance so fallen that
His hook he left to drop down at his feet,
And told the rest: "Now let him not be struck."
My Leader said to me: "O thou that sittest
Mid the great splinters of the ridge, crouching,
Crouching, in safety now return to me."
Wherefore I moved, and quickly came to him;
And then the devils all pressed forward so
That I feared lest their compact be not kept.
And thus I once saw foot-soldiers afraid,
That came by compact from Caprona forth
And saw so many enemies about.
I drew with my whole person close beside
My Leader, and turned not away my eyes
From their appearances, which were not good;
For, lowering their grapples, one would ask
Another: "Wilt thou that I touch his rump?"
And they would answer: "Yes, give him a nick!"
That demon, though, who was conversing with
My Leader, turned in instant readiness
And said: "Be quiet, quiet, Scarmiglione!"
Then said to us: "One can no further go
Along this rock, because the sixth arch lies
All broken into fragments in the depths.
And if it please you still to go ahead,
Go on along this ridge; near by there is
Another rock that furnishes a way.

Later than this by five hours yesterday
Filled out a thousand years, two hundred, six
And sixty since the way was broken here.
In that direction I am sending some
Of these of mine, to see if any air
Themselves; go with them, they will not be bad.
Come forward, Alichino, Calcabrina,
And thou, Cagnazzo," he began to say;
"And, Barbariccia, do thou guide the ten.
Come, Libicocco, too, and Draghignazzo,
Tusked Ciriatto and Graffiacane,
And Farfarello, and mad Rubicante.
Search ye the boiling pitch around; let these
Be safe as far as to the other crag
Which all unbroken goes above the dens."
"O me! What is it, Master, that I see?"
Said I; "ah, without escort let us go
Alone, if thou knowest how. I want it not
For me. If thou art wary, as it is
Thy wont to be, seest thou not that they grin,
And with their brows are threatening us with harm?"
And he to me: "I would not have thee fear;
Let them keep grinning, just at their own will,
For they do that at those who boil in pain."
Upon the left bank then they made a turn;
But first had each one pressed between his teeth
His tongue, toward their leader for a sign,
And he had made a trumpet of his rump.

CANTO XXII

I HAVE seen horsemen ere now moving camp,
Begin assaulting, do their mustering,
And sometimes making off for their escape;

I have seen riders over land of yours,
O Aretines, and seen the raids go on,
Arms clash at tournaments, and jousters tilt,
At times with trumpets, and at times with bells,
With drums, and signals from a castle given,
And with familiar and with foreign things;
But ne'er to so perverse wind-instrument
Have I seen horsemen move, nor men on foot,
Nor ship by sign of land or of a star.
With the ten demons we were going on;
Ah, horrid company! but, in the church
With saints, in taverns with the gluttonous.
I was attentive only to the pitch,
To see the whole condition of the bolgia
And of the people that were burning there.
Just as the dolphins, when they gave a sign
To sailors by the arching of their backs,
That they may give their thought to save their ship:
So, to alleviate the pain at times,
One of the sinners brought his back in sight
And hid it in less time than lightning takes.
As at the edge of water in a ditch
The frogs will stay with just their muzzles out,
So that they hide their feet and other bulk:
So were the sinners staying on all sides;
But soon as Barbariccia drew near,
Beneath the boiling they would draw them back.
I saw,—and my heart shudders at it still,—
One waiting so, as it will happen that,
While one frog stays, another jumps away:
And Graffiacane, who was nearest him,
Struck in his hook into his pitchy locks
And drew him up, an otter as it seemed.
I knew the name already of each one,

I had so noted them when they were chosen,
And when they called each other, listened how.
"O Rubicante, see thou set thy claws
Into his back so that thou take his skin,"
Cried out together all the accursed ones.
And I: "My Master, if thou canst, so do
That thou mayst learn who is the unlucky one,
Thus come into his adversaries' hands."
My Leader drew close to his side, and asked
Of him whence he had come; and he replied:
"I was born in the kingdom of Navarre.
My mother placed me servant to a lord,
For she had borne me to a ribald father,
Destroyer of himself and of his goods.
Then servant of good king Thibault was I;
There set myself to practise barratry,
Of which I give accounting in this heat."
And Ciriatto, from whose mouth came forth
On either side a tusk, as from a hog's,
Made him to feel how one of them could rip.
The mouse was fallen among evil cats;
But Barbariccia closed him in his arms,
And said: "Stand off, while I have him enforked,"
And to my Master turned his face and said:
"Ask further, if thou wilt learn more from him
Before some other one undo him quite."
The Leader: "Then tell now of the other sinners;
Dost thou know anyone beneath the pitch,
Who is Italian?" And he: "I just now
Parted from one, a neighbor, there beyond;
Would I were still with him so covered up
That I should have no fear of claw or hook!"
And Libicocco said: "We have endured
Too much;" and with the hook so seized his arm,

He bore away a piece of flesh, torn off.
And Draghignazzo too would fain have clutched
Down at his legs; round their decurion
Did turn at that with evil in his look.
When they had been a little pacified,
Of him who still was gazing at his wound
My Leader asked without delay: "Who was
The one from whom thou sayest that thou mad'st
A parting that was ill, to come ashore?"
And he made answer: "It was Friar Gomita,
He of Gallura, vessel of all fraud,
Who had his lord's foes in his hand, and dealt
So with them, that each praises him therefor.
Money he took and let them plainly go,
As he has said; in other duties too
No petty barrator, but sovereign, he.
With him associates Don Michel Zanche
Of Logodoro; and their tongues are ne'er
Weary of talking of Sardinia.
O me! Look at the other one who grins!
I would say more, but I am fearful lest
He be preparing now to scratch my scurf."
And the great Marshal turned to Farfarello,
Whose eyes were rolling, as if he would strike,
And said: "Make off from here, thou wicked bird!"
"If it be your desire to see or hear,"
The terrified one then began again,
"Tuscans or Lombards I will have some come.
But let the Malebranche stay awhile
Apart, that these their vengeance may not fear;
And I, while sitting in this very place,
For one that I am, will have seven come
When I shall whistle, as our custom is
To do, when one of us is rising out."

Cagnazzo raised his muzzle at such speech,
Shaking his head, and said: "Hear the sly trick
He has thought out for rushing down below!"
He thereupon, who had great wealth of snares,
Replied: "Given to tricks am I too much,
When I procure my comrades greater sorrow."
Then Alichino held not in, but said
To him, against the others' will: "If thou
Plunge down, I will not gallop after thee,
But I will beat my wings above the pitch;
Leave we the ridge, and be the bank a screen,
To see if thou alone prevail o'er us."
O thou who readest, thou shalt hear new sport!
Each turned his eyes toward the other side;
He first who was most angry so to do.
The Navarrese chose well his time, his feet
Set firmly on the ground, and instantly
Leaping, had from their purpose freed himself.
At this each one of them felt stung with fault,
But he the most who caused the loss; and so
He started forth, and cried out: "Thou art caught!"
But it availed him little, for the wings
Could not outstrip the fear; that one went under,
This one turned upward, as he flew, his breast.
Not otherwise the wild duck suddenly
Dives under when the falcon has drawn near,
Who upward turns again, rumpled and vexed.
Then Calcabrina, angered at the cheat,
Kept flying on behind him, charmed to have
That one escaped, that he might have a scuffle.
And when the barrator had disappeared,
He turned upon his fellow with his claws
And grappled with him there above the ditch.
But that one was indeed a hawk full-grown

To claw him well, and both of them fell down
Into the middle of the boiling pool.
The heat was an ungrappler, suddenly;
But yet to raise themselves was not to be,
They had their wings so sticky with the pitch.
Then Barbariccia,—all his troop distressed,—
Had four of them fly to the other side
With all the drag-hooks, and right speedily
This side and that they went down to their posts;
They stretched their hooks out toward the two belimed,
Who were already cooked within the crust;
And thus we left them in their troubled plight.

CANTO XXIII

Silent, alone, and without company
One following the other, we went on,
As Minor friars go along the way.
My thought was by the present quarrel turned
Upon the fable in which Aesop told
About the frog and mouse; for *now* is not
More like *this instant,* than the one case was
To the other, if one rightly coupled both
End and beginning with attentive mind.
And as one thought bursts from another, so
From that one there was born another then,
Which made my first fear double. Thus I thought:
"It is through us that these are put to scorn,
With injury and with such mockery
As I believe must give them much offence.
If anger to ill-will be added on,
They will come after us more cruel than
The dog is to the hare that he snaps up."

Already I could feel my hair all rise
With fear, keeping intent on aught behind us,
When I said: "Master, if thou speedily
Do not conceal thyself and me, I dread
The Malebranche; they are after us
Already; I in fancy feel them now."
And that one: "If I were of leaded glass
I should no quicker draw unto myself
Thy form without, than I take that within.
Thy thoughts but now were coming among mine,
The same in act, and in their look the same,
So that with both I made a single plan.
In case the bank upon our right so lies
That we in the other bolgia can go down,
We shall escape from the imagined chase."
He had not finished stating such a plan,
When I saw them come on with wings outspread
Not far away, intent on seizing us.
My Leader suddenly took hold of me,
Like as a mother wakened by the noise,
Who sees close to her the enkindled flames,
And takes her son, and flies, and tarries not,—
Having more thought of him than of herself,—
So long as only to put on a shift;
And, downward from the ridge of the hard bank,
Supine, he gave himself to the sloping rock,
Which walls the other bolgia on one side.
Never did water through a conduit run
At such a speed to turn a land-mill's wheel,
When it is nearest to the paddle-boards,
As did my Master o'er that bordering slope,
Who carried me along upon his breast,
Not as companion, but as his own son.
His feet had scarcely in the depth below

The bottom touched, when those were on the height
Above us; but there was no need of fear,
For the high Providence that willed to set
Them as the ministers of the fifth ditch,
Deprived them of all power of going thence.
We found a painted people there below,
With very slow steps, going round in tears,
And with a look weary and overcome.
They had cloaks on with hoods that came down low
Before their eyes, and in such fashion made
As in Cologne they make them for the monks.
They outwardly are gilded so, it dazzles;
Within, all lead, and of such weight that those
Which Frederick put on were as of straw.
O mantle, wearisome eternally!
We turned still ever to the left along
With them, intent upon their tearful plaint.
But, weary with the weight, those people came
So slowly onward, that our company
Was fresh at every movement of the hip.
Wherefore I to my Leader: "Find, I pray,
Some one who may by deed or name be known,
And, as we go, move thou thine eyes around."
And one who understood the Tuscan speech,
Called to us from behind: "Stay ye your feet,
Ye who do run so through this dusky air;
Perhaps from me thou shalt get what thou seekest."
Whereat the Leader turned about and said:
"Wait, and according to his pace proceed."
I stopped, and saw two show great haste of mind,
By looks, to be with me; but they moved slowly,
Because so burdened in the narrow way.
When they had joined us, long, with eyes askance
They looked at me without a word; then turned

To one another, and between them said:
"By the action of his throat this one seems living;
If they are dead, then by what privilege
Go they uncovered by the heavy stole?"
Then said to me: "O Tuscan, who hast reached
The college of the wretched hypocrites,
Disdain not telling who thou art." And I
To them: "I had my birth and I grew up
In the great city by fair Arno's stream,
And I am with that body always mine.
But who are ye, in whom such pain sends down,
As I behold, its drops along your cheeks?
What punishment is on you glittering so?"
And one replied to me: "The orange hoods
Are laden, and so thick are they, the weights
Are making thus their balances to creak.
Jovial Friars were we and Bolognese.
I Catalano, Loderingo he
By name, together by thy city taken,
As it is wont to choose one man alone,
To guard its peace; and we were such, as still
Appears by the Gardingo's neighborhood."
"O Friars," I began, "your evil deeds—"
But said no more, because my eye caught one
Upon the ground with three stakes crucified.
When he saw me, no part of him but writhed,
As he with sighing blew into his beard;
And Friar Catalano noting this,
Said: "The transfixed one, whom thou look'st at told
The Pharisees it was expedient
To put one man to torture for the people.
Traverse and naked is he on the road,
As thou dost see, and he is forced to feel
Whoever passes, how much he weighs, first.

And in like manner suffers in this ditch
His father-in-law, and all the council else,
Which was a seed of evil for the Jews."
Then saw I Virgil greatly wondering
Above the one who was as on a cross
So vilely in the eternal exile stretched.
Thereafter he addressed the Friar thus:
"Be not displeased to tell us, if ye may,
If on the right lies any opening,
By which we two can go our way from here
Without enforcing the Black Angels' power
To come and extricate us from this deep."
He answered then: "Nearer than thou dost hope
There is a rock from the great circling wall
That starts and all the cruel valleys spans,
Save that at this one it is broken down
And covers it not; its ruins ye can mount;
They lie a-slope and heap up at the base."
The Leader stood a while with head bowed down;
Then said: "The business was ill told by him,
Who hooks the sinners yonder." And the Friar:
"Oft in Bologna I heard men assign
The devil vices many, among which
I heard that he tells lies, and is their father."
And then the Leader with great steps went on,
Somewhat disturbed, with anger in his look;
Whereon I parted from the burdened ones,
Following the prints of the beloved feet.

CANTO XXIV

In that part of the young year when the sun
Tempers his locks beneath Aquarius
And now the nights are moving toward the south,

When the hoar-frost, like to a copyist,
Draws his white sister's image on the ground,
Though briefly lasts the temper of his pen,
The peasant, who has little fodder left,
Rises and looks, and sees the plain all white,
Whereat he smites upon his thigh; goes back
Into his house, and to and fro complains,
Like the poor wretch who knows not what to do;
Then coming out again recovers hope,
Seeing the world to have an altered face
In little time, and takes his shepherd's crook
And forth the tender sheep to pasture drives:
Thus had the Master caused dismay in me,
When I beheld him so disturbed in brow;
Thus quickly to the hurt the plaster came.
Because, when we had reached the ruined bridge,
The Leader turned to me with that sweet look,
Which I saw first when at the mountain's foot.
His arms he opened, following some plan
Himself had chosen, looking carefully
At first upon the ruin, and seized me.
And like to one who works and estimates,
Who always seems beforehand to provide,
So, as he lifted me toward the top
Of one great rock, he eyed another splinter,
Saying: "On that one next seize hold, but first
See if it be such as will bear thy weight."
It was no way for one clothed with a cloak,
For scarcely we, he light, and I pushed up,
Could mount from jutting rock to jutting rock.
And were it not that on that boundary
The slope was shorter than upon the other,—
I know not about him,—I were foredone.
But since the whole of Malebolge slopes

Toward the opening of the lowest pit,
The site of every valley brings about
That one side rises more, the other less;
However, we at last attained the point
Where the least stone of all is broken off.
The breath had been from out my lungs so milked
When I was up, that further I could not;
Nay, on my first arriving, sat me down.
"Henceforth thou must thus rid thyself of sloth,"
The Master said; "for one comes not to fame
On downy seat or under coverlet;
Without which whoso does consume his life,
Such vestige upon earth leaves of himself
As smoke in air, and in the water foam;
And therefore rise, conquer thy panting with
The spirit that in every battle wins,
If with its heavy body it sink not.
A longer stairway must be climbed; it is not
Enough to have left these; if thou dost grasp
My thought, now act so that it profit thee."
Then I rose up, showing that I with breath
Was better furnished than I felt, and said:
"Go on; I am courageous now and strong."
We took our upward way along the rock,
Which was here rugged, narrow, difficult,
And steeper far than was the one before.
Not to seem weak I talked as I went on;
Whereon from the next foss a voice came out,
Ill-fitted to articulate its words.
I know not what it said, though I had reached
The middle of the arch which crosses here;
But he who spoke the words seemed moved to wrath.
I had turned downward, but my living eyes
Could not go to the bottom through the dark.

Whereat I: "Master, see that thou do reach
The other ring; let us go down the wall;
As, listening hence, I do not understand;
So I look down, and can distinguish naught."
"Other reply," said he, "I make thee not,
Except in act; because the fair request
Should be in silence followed by the deed."
We went on down the bridge to where its head
Is with the eighth embankment joined; and then
The bolgia was made manifest to me;
And I saw there within a terrible
Thronging of serpents of a kind so strange,
That still the memory congeals my blood.
Let Lybia boast no longer with her sand;
For though chelydri, jaculi, phareae,
Cenchri with amphisbaena, she bring forth,
She never with all Ethiopia,
Nor with the land that by the Red Sea lies,
Has shown so many plagues, nor yet so dire.
Amid this cruel and most dismal swarm
Were naked people running, terrified,
And without hope of hole or heliotrope.
With serpents were their hands behind them bound;
And these were thrusting through their loins the tail
And head, and were in front in knotted coils.
And lo! at one who was beside our bank,
Darted a serpent and transfixed him there,
Where to the shoulders knotted is the neck.
Never was *O* nor *I* so quickly writ,
As he caught fire and burned, and utterly
To ashes turned, perforce, as he fell down;
And when he was thus on the ground destroyed,
The dust did draw together of itself,
And turned to that same one again at once.

In such a way, great sages have affirmed,
The Phoenix dies, and then is born again
When she draws near to her five hundredth year;
In life she feeds on neither herb nor grain,
But only tears of incense and amomum;
And nard and myrrh are her last winding-sheet.
And like the one who falls and knows not how,
By demon-force, which drags him to the ground,
Or by obstruction else that binds a man,
When he gets up, so that he gazes round
Wholly bewildered by the great distress
That he has suffered from, and, looking, sighs;
Such was that sinner after he had risen.
Power of God! Oh, how severe it is,
That showers down for vengeance blows like these!
The Leader then asked of him who he was;
And he replied: "I rained from Tuscany
Into this savage gullet not long since.
Life as a beast's, not as a man's, pleased me,
Mule that I was; my name is Vanni Fucci,
Beast, and Pistoia was my fitting den."
And to the Leader I: "Bid him not slip
Away, but ask what crime thrust him down here;
I have seen him a man of blood and rage."
The sinner, who had understood, feigned not,
But turned toward me his spirit and his face,
And took the hue of melancholic shame;
And said: "It hurts more that thou catch me in
The misery, in which thou seest me, than
When I was taken from the other life.
That which thou askest I can not refuse;
I am put down so far because I robbed
The sacristy of the fair ornaments;
With which another once was falsely charged.

But that thou mayest not enjoy this sight,
If ever thou art out of these dark places,
To my announcement lend thine ears, and hear:
Pistoia first doth strip herself of Blacks,
Then folk and fashions Florence renovates.
From Valdimagra Mars is drawing forth
A vapor that is wrapped in turbid clouds;
And with impetuous and bitter storm
There shall be fighting in the Pescian plain;
Whence it shall suddenly so rend the mist,
That every White shall wounded be thereby;
And this I say that it may make thee grieve."

CANTO XXV

At the conclusion of his words the thief
Lifted his hands with both the figs, and cried:
"Take that, God, for it is to Thee I square them!"
From that time forth the serpents were my friends,
For one then coiled about his neck, as if
It said: "I will not have thee utter more!"
About his arms another pinioned him
Anew, clinching itself in front of him
So that he could not give a shake with them.
Pistoia! Ah, Pistoia! Why not plan
To turn to ashes to endure no more,
Since in ill-doing thou excell'st thy seed!
Through all the circles of dark hell I saw
No spirit against God so arrogant,
Not even him who fell down from the walls
At Thebes. He fled without another word;
And I beheld a centaur full of rage
Come crying out: "Where is the harsh one, where?"

Maremma has not, I believe, of snakes
So many as he had upon his croup
To where the semblance of ourselves begins.
Behind the nape upon his shoulders lay
A dragon on him with his wings outspread;
And whomsoe'er it meets it sets on fire.
Then said my Master: "This is Cacus, who
Within his cavern 'neath Mount Aventine
Has made full many a time a lake of blood.
He goes not with his brothers by one road
Because of the deceptive theft he made
Of the great herd that he had near to him;
Whereby his crooked deeds came to an end
Beneath the club of Hercules, who dealt
Some hundred blows on him, who felt not ten."
While he spoke thus, and that one had run by,
Behold, below us had three spirits come,
Of whom my Leader had not been aware,
Nor I, until they cried out: "Who are ye?"
On that account our story came to an end,
And afterwards we heeded them alone.
I did not know them, but it happened then,
As it is wont to happen by some chance,
That one had cause to use another's name,
Saying: "Where can have Cianfa stayed behind?"
So, that my Leader might attentive stand,
I put my finger up from chin to nose.
If thou art, reader, slow to credit now
What I shall tell, it were not strange, for I
Who saw it, scarce admit it to myself.
As I my brows held raised upon them, lo!
A serpent with six feet darted in front
Of one and fastened on his every part;
For with his middle feet it clasped his paunch,

And with its fore feet seized upon his arms;
And then it set its teeth in both his cheeks;
Its hind feet it spread out upon his thighs,
And having put its tail between the two,
It stretched it up behind along his reins.
Ivy was never rooted so to tree,
As was this horrible wild-beast entwined
About the other's members with its own;
Thereafter, as if they had been hot wax,
They stuck together, and their color mingled;
Now neither seemed to be what it had been.
As moves along before the burning flame
Over the paper upward color dark
But not yet black, while its white dies away.
The other two were looking on, and each
Cried out: "O me, Agnello! how thou changest!
See, how thou art now neither two nor one!"
Already had the two heads grown to one,
When there appeared to us two countenances
Mixed in one face, wherein the two were lost.
The two arms formed themselves out of four strips;
The thighs and legs, the belly and the chest
Became such members as were never seen.
All their first aspect had been canceled there;
Two and yet none seemed the perverted form,
And being such, with slow step went away.
As under the great scourge of dogdays, when
It changes hedge for hedge, the lizard seems
A flash of lightning, if it cross the way:
So seemed a little serpent all on fire,
Livid and black as pepper-corn, to come
Toward the bellies of the other two;
And it transfixed in one of them that part,
Where first our nourishment is taken; then

Fell down stretched out in front of him. The one
Who was transfixed, gazed at it, but said naught,
Nay, with steps stayed, was yawning, just as if
Sleep or a fever were assailing him.
He viewed the serpent, and the serpent him;
One from his wound, the other from his mouth
Sent forth great smoke, and smoke encountered smoke.
Thenceforth be Lucan silent where he tells
Of poor Sabellus and Nasidius,
And wait to hear that which is now revealed.
Of Cadmus and of Arethusa silent
Be Ovid, for if he as poet turn
Her to a fountain, to a serpent him,
I envy him not; for never front to front
Transmuted he two natures, so that both
The forms were ready to exchange their matter.
They mutually responded by such rules,
The serpent cleft its tail into a fork,
The stricken one together drew his feet.
The legs and, too, the thighs along with them
So stuck together that their juncture soon
Had left behind it no apparent mark.
The tail that had been cleft was taking on
The shape the other one was losing, while
Its skin was growing soft, the other's hard.
I saw the arms go through the arm-pits in,
The two feet of the beast, that had been short,
Lengthen as much as those were shortening.
Later the hinder feet, together twisted,
Became the member that a man conceals,
And from his own the wretch had two thrust forth.
And while the smoke was veiling both of them
With color new, and generates the hair
Upon one side and strips it from the other,

The one rose up, the other falling down,
  Nor did they turn for that the impious lights,
  Beneath which each of them was changing muzzle.
The one erect drew his in toward the temples,
  And from superfluous matter coming there
  Issued the ears from cheeks that had been smooth;
That which did not run back, but was retained,
  Of its excess made of itself a nose,
  And made the lips of thickness suitable.
He that lay prone his muzzle forward thrusts,
  And backward draws his ears into his head,
  As does the snail its horns; and, too, his tongue,
Which was before united and was quick
  In speaking, cleaves itself; and in the other
  The forked tongue closes up; the smoke has ceased.
The soul, that had become an animal,
  Fled down the valley, hissing as it went,
  The other after it with sputtering speech.
Then turned he his new shoulders on it, saying
  Unto the third: "I want Buoso should run,
  As I have, groveling, along this path."
The seventh ballast thus I saw to change
  And change again; and here be my excuse
  The novelty, if my pen slightly stray.
And though my eyes might be somewhat confused
  And mind bewildered, yet thou couldst not flee
  Away so covertly, that I did not
Puccio Sciancato plainly recognize:
  And he it was alone of all the three
  Companions that came first, that was not changed;
The other he whom thou, Gaville, weepest.

CANTO XXVI

Be joyful, Florence, since thou art so great
That over land and over sea thou beatest
Thy wings, and thy name spreads abroad through hell!
Among the thieves I came upon five such,
Thy citizens, that shame came over me,
And to great honor thou mount'st not thereby.
But if toward morning truth is in our dreams,
Thou art to feel in little time from this
What Prato craves for thee, and others too.
And it were not too soon, if it were now;
So were it! since it is to be indeed;
It will weigh the more on me, the more I age.
We set out thence, and up along the stairs
The bourns had made for our descent before,
The Leader mounted now, and drew me up;
Pursuing thus the solitary way
'Mid stones and fragments of the rocky bridge,
The foot without the hand to help sped not.
I sorrowed then and sorrow now again
When I direct my mind to what I saw,
And curb my genius more than I am wont,
That unless virtue guide it, it run not;
That I rob not myself, if some good star
Or better thing have granted me that good.
In as great numbers as the countryman,
Who rests upon the hillside,—at the season
When he who lights the world hides least his face
From us, and hour when flies give place to gnats,—
Sees fireflies in the valley at his feet,
Perhaps there where he gathers grapes, and ploughs:
With flames as many glittering throughout

Was the eighth bolgia, I perceived, as soon
As I was where its depth appeared in sight.
And as he who took vengeance by the bears
Beheld Elijah's chariot depart
When up to heaven the horses rose erect,—
For with his eyes he could not follow so
That he saw other than the flame alone
Ascending upward like a little cloud:
So each flame through the gully of the ditch
Was moving on, for none displayed its theft;
And every one hides furtively a sinner.
I stood upon the bridge, so risen up
To see, that if I had not seized a rock,
I should have fallen down, e'en though not pushed.
The Leader, who saw I was so intent,
Said to me: "In those fires the spirits are;
Each swathes himself with what is burning him."
"My Master," I replied, "for hearing thee
Am I more certain, but I thought already
That it was so, and would already say:
Who is within that fire that comes with top
So parted, it seems rising from the pyre
Eteocles was laid on with his brother?"
He answered me: "Within it are Ulysses
And Diomed tormented; thus they go
In punishment together as in wrath;
And in their flame do they lament with groans
The ambush of the horse which made the gate
By which the Romans' noble seed came forth;
They weep within it for the craft, whereby
Deidamia dead grieves for Achilles
Still; and the penalty is there endured
For the Palladium." "If they can speak
Within those sparks," said I, "I pray thee much,

Master,—and pray again my prayer be worth
A thousand,—that thou wilt deny me not
The waiting till the horned flame hither come;
Thou seest that I bend toward it with desire."
And he: "Thy prayer is worthy of much praise,
And therefore I accept it; but do thou
Take heed that thy tongue hold itself in check.
Leave me to speak, for I have understood
What thou wilt have; since they, as they were Greeks,
Might be, perchance, disdainful of thy words."
As soon as to that point the flame had come
Where to my Leader it seemed place and time,
After this manner heard I him to speak:
"O ye, who both are in a single flame,
If I had merit with you while I lived,
If I had merit with you, much or little,
When in the world I wrote the lofty verses,
Move not; but may there one of you relate
Whither he journeyed, lost, unto his death."
The ancient flame within its greater horn
Began to shake itself with murmuring,
Even as flame which wind is wearying;
Then, moving to and fro the very tip,
As though it were the tongue that formed the words,
Cast forth a voice, and said: "When I departed
From Circe, who hid me a year and more
There near Gaeta, at a time before
Aeneas had thus given it its name,
Neither sweet care of son, nor piety
Toward my old father, nor the love due her
Which should have gladdened my Penelope,
Could overcome the ardor that I had
In me to gain experience of the world
And of the vices and the worth of men;

But I put forth on the deep, open sea
With but one ship, and with that company
Not large, and which had not deserted me.
Both shores I visited as far as Spain,
Even to Morocco, and Sardinia's isle
And others bathed in the surrounding sea.
Myself and my companions had grown old
And slow, when we had reached that narrow strait
Where Hercules had set his boundaries,
In order that man put not out beyond;
Seville I left behind upon the right,
With Ceuta passed already on the left.
'O brothers,' said I, 'who are come at last,
A hundred thousand perils undergone,
Into the west, to that which still remains
Of this, your senses' vigil, now so brief,
Do not deny experience, with the sun
In front of you, of the unpeopled world.
Consider of what origin ye are;
Ye were not made to live as do the brutes,
But to seek virtue and to learn the truth.'
With these few words addressing them, I made
So eager my companions for the voyage,
That I could scarcely then have held them back;
And when our stern to the morning had been turned,
The oars became our wings for that mad flight.
As we went, ever gaining on the left,
The night already looked on all the stars
About the other pole, with ours so low
That it rose not above the ocean floor.
Five times rekindled and as many quenched
Had been the light beneath the moon, since we
Had entered on the passage of the deep,
When there appeared to us a mountain, dark

Because of distance; and it seemed to me
Of such a height as I had never seen.
We felt great joy, but soon it turned to grief
Because a whirlwind rose from that new land
And struck our ship upon the forward part.
Three times it made her whirl around with all
The waters, and the fourth, lifted the stern
And downward sent the bow, as pleased Another,
Until the sea again closed over us."

CANTO XXVII

Already was the flame erect and quiet,—
For it had ceased to speak,—and moving off
From us with the sweet poet's license, when
Another that behind it came, caused us
To turn our eyes toward its tip, because
Of sound confused that issued forth from it.
As the Sicilian bull, which bellowed first
With the lament of him,—and that was right,—
Who with his file had given it its form,
Was wont to bellow with the sufferer's voice
So that, although it was a thing of brass,
Yet it appeared to be transfixed with pain;
So, since at first they were without a way
Or outlet from the fire, the woful words
Into its language would transform themselves.
But after they had found their course up through
The point, and given it that quivering
The tongue had given as they passed along,
We heard the words: "O thou, to whom I turn
My voice, and who just now spoke Lombard, saying:
'Now go thy way, longer I urge thee not;'

Though I come somewhat late, perchance, let it
Not weary thee to stop and talk with me;
Thou seest it wearies me not, and I burn.
If thou art fallen into this blind world
But now from that sweet land of Italy,
Whence I bring all my guilt, tell me, I pray,
If in Romagna they have peace or war;
For I was of the mountains there between
Urbino and the chain whence Tiber breaks."
I was attentive downward bending, when
My Leader touched me on my side, and said:
"Speak thou; it is an Italian." And I,
Who had already my reply prepared,
Without delay began to speak: "O soul,
Who art in thy concealment there below,
Thy land Romagna is not and was never
Without war in her tyrants' hearts, but none
Waged openly did I leave lately there.
Ravenna stands, as it has stood long years,
The eagle of Polenta brooding there,
So that he covers Cervia with his wings.
The city that the long-drawn struggle made
Erewhile, and of the French a bloody heap,
Beneath the green paws finds itself again.
Verrucchio's former mastiff and the new,
Who gave ill treatment to Montagna, make
An auger of their teeth, where they are wont.
The cities of Lamone and Santerno
Are guided by the white lair's lion cub,
Ere summer yield to winter changing side;
And she whose flank the Savio bathes, as she
Is lying 'twixt the mountain and the plain,
Lives between tyranny and free estate.
Now, I beseech thee, tell us who thou art,

Not obdurate more than another is;
So may thy name maintain its front on earth."
After the fire a little while had roared
In its own mode, the sharp point moved this way
And that, and then gave forth this breath:
"If I believed that my reply would be
To one who ever should return to earth,
This flame would stand without more quiverings;
But inasmuch as from this deep one ne'er
Returned alive, if I hear truth, without
A fear of infamy I answer thee.
I was a man of arms; then cordelier,
Trusting within, so girt, to make amends;
And certainly my trust were come to full
But for the Great Priest, whom may woe befall!
Who set me back again in my first sins;
And how and why I will thou learn from me.
When I was still the form of bones and flesh
My mother had bestowed on me, my deeds
Were like the fox's and not leonine.
The shrewd devices and the covert ways,
I knew them all, and practised so their art
That to the ends of the earth the sound went forth.
When I could see that I had now arrived
At that part of my age when every one
Should strike his sails and coil his ropes, that which
Before was pleasing, then offended me,
And penitent, confessed, I gave myself,
Wretched, alas! and it would have availed.
The Prince of the new Pharisees, who then
Was having war near to the Lateran,—
And not with Saracens, nor yet with Jews,
For every enemy of his was Christian,
And none had been at Acre conquering,

Nor in the Soldan's land a trafficker,—
Regarded not his Supreme Office, nor
His Holy Orders, nor in me that cord
Which used to make those girt with it more lean.
But as within Soracte Constantine
Bade that Silvester cure his leprosy,
So this one bade that I, as an adept,
Should cure the fever of his arrogance;
He asked of me advice, and I kept silent,
Because his words seemed drunken; then he said
To me: 'Let not thy heart mistrust; from now
I thee absolve; teach thou me so to act
That I throw Palestrina to the ground.
I have the power to lock and unlock heaven,
As thou dost know; for that the keys are two,
Which he who went before me held not dear.'
The weighty arguments then forced me there
Where to keep silent seemed to me the worst,
And I said: 'Father, since thou washest me
From that sin into which I now must fall,
Long promise with short keeping will make thee
To be triumphant on the lofty seat.'
Francis came afterwards, when I was dead,
For me, but one of the dark Cherubim
Said to him: 'Take him not; do me no wrong.
He must come down among my menials,
Because he gave the fraudulent advice,
From which time on I have been at his hair;
For who repents not can not be absolved;
One can not both repent and will at once,
Because the contradiction grants it not.'
O wretched me! how I awakened then
When he seized me, saying to me: 'Perchance
Thou didst not deem me a logician!'

He bore me off to Minos, who eight times
Twisted his tail round his unyielding back;
And when he in great rage had bitten it,
He said: 'This is a sinner for the fire
That hides;' wherefore I where thou seest am lost,
And in affliction, as I go thus robed."
When he had thus brought to an end his words,
The flame took its departure, sorrowing,
Twisting and tossing with its pointed horn.
Onward we pressed, I and my Leader both,
Along the rock to the next arch that covers
The ditch, in which the fee is paid by those,
Who get a burden through dissevering.

CANTO XXVIII

Who ever could, even with words unbound,
Fully describe the blood and wounds that now
I saw, although he told it many times?
All tongues would certainly come short of it,
Because our language and the memory
Have small capacity to hold so much.
If all the people were assembled still
Who on Apulia's field of fortune erst
Were put to grief for their blood that was shed
By them of Troy, and too by that long war
Which furnished of the rings spoils heaped so high,
As Livy writes, who does not err; and those,
Who in withstanding Robert Guiscard felt
The pain of blows, and those whose bones are still
Together in a heap at Ceperano,
Where each Apulian was traitorous;
And those who were at Tagliacozzo, where

The old Alardo conquered without arms;
And should this one display his limb transpierced,
And that one his, lopped off: it matched nowise
The mode of the ninth bolgia hideous.
Even a cask, with mid-piece lost, or stave,
Is not split open so as I saw one,
Ripped from the chin to where the wind is broken,
His entrails hanging down between his legs;
His pluck appeared and the distressful pouch
Which turns to ordure what is swallowed down.
While wholly upon him I fixed my gaze,
He looked at me, and opening his breast
With his own hands, said: "Now thou seest how I
Do rend myself; how mangled, Mahomet.
Before me Ali goes along in tears,
With his face cleft from forelock to the chin;
And all the others whom thou seest here
Were scatterers of scandal in their lives,
And schism, and for that reason are thus cleft.
A devil, here behind us, fashions us
Thus cruelly, subjecting of this band
Each one to hewing of his sword afresh,
When we have gone around the woful road;
Because the wounds will have closed up again
Ere one returns to pass in front of him.
But who art thou, that musest on the rock,
To put off going to that penalty,
Perchance, adjudged upon thy self-reproof?"
"Nor death has reached him yet, nor guilt leads him,"
Answered my Master, "to torment him; but
To give him full experience, must needs
I, who am dead, conduct him throughout hell
From circle unto circle here below;
And this is true, as 'tis I speak to thee."

More than a hundred were there who heard him,
And stopped then in the ditch to look at me,
Through wondering oblivious to their pain.
"Now then, bid Fra Dolcino arm himself,
Thou who perchance wilt shortly see the sun,
If he will not soon follow me down here,
So with provisions, that a stress of snow
Give not the Novarese the victory,
Which otherwise to gain were no slight thing."
After one foot was lifted up to go
Had Mahomet addressed me with these words;
Then as he left he stretched it to the ground.
Another, who had had his throat pierced through
And nose cut off up to beneath the brow,
And had no longer but a single ear,
Standing to gaze in wonder with the rest,
Before the rest then laid his windpipe open,
Which outwardly was red in every part,
And said: "Thou who art not condemned by guilt,
And whom I up in Italy have seen,
Unless remembrance lead me too far wrong,
Remember Pier da Medicina, if
Thou e'er return to look on that sweet plain
That from Vercelli slopes to Marcabò,
And let the two best men of Fano know,
Messer Guido and Angiolello too,
That, if our foresight here do not prove vain,
They shall be cast into the sea and drowned
In weighted sacks near La Cattolica,
Because of a fell tyrant's treachery.
Between the isles of Cyprus and Majorca
Neptune ne'er looked upon so great a crime,
Not of the pirates, nor of Argive stock.
That traitor, who sees only with one eye,

And holds the land which one down here with me
Would that his eyes had never fed upon,
Will have them come to him for parleying;
Then will deal so that 'gainst Focara's wind
They will have need of neither vow nor prayer."
And I to him: "Show to me and declare,
If thou wilt that I take up news of thee,
Who is the one to whom the sight was bitter?"
He laid his hand then on the jaw of one
Of his companions, opening the mouth,
And cried out: "This is he, and he talks not;
This one in banishment stifled the doubt
In Caesar, affirming that the man equipped
Sustained delay always with injury."
Oh, how aghast did he appear to me,
Who had his tongue now cut out from his throat,
Curio, who had been so bold to speak!
And one, whose hands were both of them cut off,
Raising the stumps into the dusky air,
So that the blood was making his face foul,
Cried out: "Thou wilt remember Mosca too,
Who said, alas! 'A thing done, there's an end!'
Which for the Tuscan folk was seed of ill."
I added for him: "And thy kindred's death;"
Whereat he, heaping woe on woe, went off
Upon his way, as one in sadness, mad.
But I remained there gazing at the crowd,
And saw a thing that I should be afraid,
Without more proof, only to tell of it;
If I were not by conscience reassured,
The good companion that emboldens man,
'Neath breastplate of its conscious purity.
I surely saw, and seem to see it still,
A trunk without a head move on, e'en as

The others of the dismal herd were moving.
And by the hair it held the severed head,
Swung like a lantern in the hand; and that
Kept looking at us as it said: "O me!"
Thus of itself it made itself a lamp,
And they were two in one and one in two;
How this can be, He knows who so ordains.
When he had reached the bridge just at the foot
He lifted high his arm with his whole head
To bring more near to us his words, which were:
"Now see the grievous punishment, thou that
Art going breathing, looking on the dead,
And see if there be any great as this!
And that thou mayst take tidings of me, know
I am Bertran de Born, the one that gave
Evil encouragements to the young king.
Father and son I set at mutual war;
With wicked goading did Ahithophel
Not more to David and to Absalom.
As I divided those who were thus joined,
My own brain I am carrying, alas!
Divided from its source within this trunk.
Thus retribution is observed in me."

CANTO XXIX

The many people and the divers wounds
Wrought such inebriation in my eyes
That they were craving to remain and weep;
But Virgil said to me: "Why watching still?
Why does thy gaze remain still fixed upon
The dismal mutilated shades down there?
Thou hast not done so at the other bolge;

Consider, if thou think'st to count them, that
For two and twenty miles the valley turns;
Already is the moon beneath our feet,
The time allotted us is henceforth short;
And other things to see than those thou seest."
I thereupon replied: "If thou hadst noted
The reason why I looked, thou wouldst, perchance,
Have granted me a longer stay." Meanwhile
The Leader went along, and I behind
Was following, now making my reply,
And adding: "In that hollow where I was
Holding my eye just now so fixedly,
A spirit of my blood, I think, laments
The sin which is so dearly paid for there."
Then said the Master: "Let thy thought henceforth
Be not upon him broken; give thy mind
To somewhat else, and let him there remain;
For I saw him below the little bridge
Pointing at thee and fiercely threatening
With finger, and I heard them calling him
Geri del Bello; thou wast then so fully
Engaged with him who once held Hautefort,
Thou didst not look that way; so he went off."
"His death by violence, my Leader, which
Has not yet been avenged for him," said I,
"By any partner of the shame, made him
Indignant; whereupon, as I esteem,
He went away without a word to me;
And thus makes me more pitiful for him."
Thus talked we up to where upon the crag
A place shows first the valley following,
Quite to the bottom, if more light were there.
When we, above the cloister that is last
In Malebolge, came to such a place

That its lay-brothers could be seen by us,
Lamentings manifold were shot at me,
That had their arrows barbed with suffering;
Whereat my ears I covered with my hands.
Such pain as there would be if all the ills
From Valdichiana's hospitals and from
Maremma and Sardinia were together
From July to September in one ditch:
Such was there here, and such a stench came forth
As comes forth commonly from putrid limbs.
Down over the last bank of the long crag
We went, ever toward the left, and then
My sight was livelier into the deep,
In which the servant of the Lord on high,
Justice infallible, inflicts their doom,
Here registered on those who falsified.
I do not think it was a greater sorrow
To see Aegina's people all diseased,—
With the air full of such malignity,
That all the living creatures, even to
The little worm, fell down, and afterwards
The ancient peoples, as the poets hold
For true, restored themselves from seed of ants,—
Than it was to see throughout that valley dark
The spirits languishing in divers heaps.
One on his belly lay, and one across
The shoulders of another, and one sprawled,
Changing his place upon the dismal path.
Not speaking, step by step, we went along,
Looking upon and listening to the sick,
Who could not lift their bodies. I saw two
Sitting and leaning on each other so
As stew-pan against stew-pan leans to warm,
Spotted with scabs from head to foot; and never

Have I seen curry-comb so handled by
A stable-boy his master waited for,
Nor one who stays awake unwillingly,
As each plied ceaselessly upon himself
The bite of his own nails for the great rage
Of itching, which has no relief besides.
And so their nails were drawing down the scab
As does the knife the scales from bream, or fish
Of other kind which has them larger still.
"O thou that with thy fingers dost dis-mail
Thyself," to one of them began my Leader,
"And makest pincers of them now and then,
Tell us if an Italian be among
Those here within; so may thy nails suffice
To thee for this work to eternity!"
"We are Italians both, whom thou seest here
Disfigured so," replied one as he wept.
"But who art thou that askest this of us?"
The Leader said: "I am one who descends
With this man living down from ledge to ledge,
And to show hell to him is my intent."
Their mutual support was broken then,
And each with trembling turned about toward me,
With others who had heard him by rebound.
Close the good Master drew me to himself,
And said: "Say to them what thou wilt;" and I
Began, since he had willed it should be so:
"So may remembrance of you not steal off
In the first world from out the minds of men,
Nay, under many suns may it live on,
Tell me, who may ye be and of what people?
Let not your foul, unseemly punishment
Fright you from showing who ye are to me."
"I was an Aretine; Albero of Siena,"

Replied one, "had me put into the flames;
But that for which I died brings me not here.
Truly I said to him, speaking in jest,
That I could raise myself in air by flight;
But curious and having little wit,
He willed that I show him the art; and just
Because I made him not a Daedalus,
He had me burned by one whose son he was.
But me, to the last bolgia of the ten,
For alchemy, which in the world I practised,
Minos condemned, one not allowed to err."
And I said to the Poet: "Now was ever
So vain a people as the Sienese?
Assuredly the French is not, by much."
Whereat the other leper who heard me,
Answered what I had said: "Excepting Stricca,
He who could make expenses moderate,
And Niccolò, the first discoverer
Of the expensive using of the clove
Within that garden where such seed takes root;
Excepting too the company, in which
Caccia of Asciano squandered vine and bough
So large, and Abbagliato showed his wit.
But that thou learn who aids thee thus against
The Sienese, sharpen thine eye toward me,
So that my face may answer thee aright;
Thus shalt thou see I am Capocchio's shade,
Who made false metals by his alchemy;
Thou shouldst recall, if I descry thee well,
The goodly ape of nature that I was."

CANTO XXX

At that time when, because of Semele,
Juno was angry with the Theban blood,
As she had more than once made manifest,
Athamas fell in such insanity
That as he saw his wife coming in charge
Of her two sons, one at each hand, he cried:
"Let us spread out the nets that I may catch
The lioness and cubs as they pass by;"
And then stretched out his talons pitiless,
Seizing the one, who was Learchus named,
And whirled him round and dashed him on the rock;
And with her other charge she drowned herself.
And when the turn of Fortune had brought low
The Trojans' loftiness, that had dared all,
And king and kingdom both were blotted out,
Hecuba, sad, distressed and captive led,
When she had seen the dead Polyxena,
And in her suffering became aware
Of her own Polydorus on the strand,
Out of her senses barked so as a dog;
So had the pain within her wrenched her mind.
But never were there Theban furies seen
Nor Trojan of such cruelty in one,
Not to goad beasts, much less the limbs of men,
As in two pale and naked shades I saw,
That biting ran about in such a way
As does the boar when let out from the sty.
One coming to Capocchio struck his tusks
Into his neck-joint so, that, dragging him,
He made his belly scratch on solid ground.
The Aretine, who still stood trembling, said:

"That sprite is Gianni Schicchi, and he goes
Thus in his anger treating others ill."
"Oh," said I then to him, "so may that other
Not fix his teeth in thee, let it not be
A burden to thee to say who it is,
Ere it go hence." And he to me: "That is
The ancient soul of wicked Myrrha, who
Became her father's love with love undue.
She came in such wise to her sin with him,
Herself disguising in another's form,
As he did dare, who yonder goes away,
That he might gain the lady of the stud,
Disguise himself, as if Buoso Donati,
Making a will and giving it due form."
And after the two rabid ones had passed,
On whom my eye was fixed, I turned it back
To look upon the rest of the ill-born.
I saw one made in fashion as a lute,
Provided only he had had his groin
Cut short at that part where a man is forked.
The heavy dropsy, which unpairs the limbs
With ill-digested humor, in such wise
That face and belly do not correspond,
Was causing him to hold his lips apart
As does the hectic who, because of thirst
Turns one toward the chin, the other up.
"O ye who have not any punishment,—
And why, I know not,—in this grievous world,"
Said he to us, "behold and contemplate
The misery of Master Adam; when alive,
I had enough of what I wished, and now,
Alas! one little drop of water crave!
The little brooks, that in the Casentino
Flow toward the Arno down the hills of green,

Causing their channels to be cool and soft,
Ever before me stand, and not in vain,
Because their image dries me up far more,
Than does the malady whereby I strip
My face of flesh. The rigid Justice, which
Is scouring me, at that place where I sinned,
Finds means to put my sighs in flight the more.
There is Romena, where I falsified
The coinage that did bear the Baptist's stamp,
For which I left above my body burnt.
But could I see the wretched soul of Guido,
Or Alessandro, or their brother here,
For Fontebranda I'd not give the sight.
One is already in, if the mad shades
That go around speak true; but what
Does that avail me, who have my limbs bound?
If I were only still so light, that I
Could in a hundred years advance one inch,
I should have started on the way already,
In search of him among the ugly folk,
Although it circles for eleven miles
And is not less than half a mile across.
Through them am I in such a family;
They led me on to strike the flower-coins,
That had indeed three carats of alloy."
And I to him: "Who are the wretched two,
That steam like wet hands in the winter-time,
And close together lie at thy right confines?"
"I found them here," he answered, "when I rained
Into this chasm; and, since, they have not given
A turn, nor will they ever, as I think.
The false one, by whom Joseph was accused
Is one; the other, Sinon, the false Greek
From Troy; sharp fever makes them smell so burnt."

And one of them who took offence, perhaps,
At being named so darkly, with his fist
Struck him who spoke upon the hardened paunch
Which gave a sound as though it were a drum;
And Master Adam struck him with his arm
Which did not seem less hard, upon the face,
Saying to him: "Although I am deprived
Of motion by my heaviness of limb,
I have one arm free for such need as this."
To which he said: "When going to the fire
Thou hadst it not thus ready; but thou hadst
It so, and more, when thou didst make the coins."
He of the dropsy: "Thou say'st true of this;
But thou wast not so true a witness there
When thou wast questioned of the truth at Troy."
"If I spoke false, thou madest the false coin,"
Said Sinon; "I am here for one crime, but
For more than any other demon, thou."
"Remember, perjurer, the horse," replied
The one with the inflated paunch, "and may it
Hurt thee that all the world should know of it."
"And may the thirst hurt thee, that cracks thy tongue,
And that foul water," said the Greek, "that makes
Thy belly such a hedge before thine eyes!"
The coiner then: "Thy mouth is gaping so
To its own harm, as is its wont; if I
Am thirsty and a humor stuffs me up,
Thou hast a burning and a head that aches;
To lap the mirror of Narcissus thou
Wouldst to invite thee not need many words."
I was all fixed in listening to them when
The Master said to me: "Now just look on!
For little I were quarreling with thee."
When I heard him in anger speak to me,

I turned me toward him with such shame, that still
It is revolving in my memory.
And like to one who dreams of his own harm,
And, dreaming, wishes that it be a dream,
Longing, as though it were not, for what is,
Did I become, without the power to speak,
Who fain excused myself, and did excuse,
And thought not that I did it, all the while.
"Less shame doth wash away a greater fault,"
The Master said, "than thine has been; therefore
Of all thy sadness lay aside the load;
Account that I am always at thy side,
If it again befall that Fortune find thee
Where there are those in like dispute, because
Desire to hear it is a base desire."

CANTO XXXI

One and the same tongue first so wounded me
That it tinged both my cheeks, and afterwards
Supplied to me the means that healed again.
In such a way, I hear, Achilles' lance,—
His father's erst,—was wont to be the cause
First of a sad and then of a good gift.
We turned our backs on the great vale of woe
And up, over the bank that girds it round
Went on our way across without a word.
Here it was less than night and less than day,
So that my sight went little forward; but
I heard a horn give forth a blast so loud,
It had made feeble any thunder-clap;
Which turned my eyes, that followed back its course
Upon itself, entirely to one place.

After the dolorous rout, when Charlemagne
  Had lost the consecrated multitude,
  Roland gave not so terrible a blast.
Not long had I my head turned thitherward
  When many lofty towers I seemed to see;
  Whereat I: "Master, say, what city this?"
And he to me: "Because thou hastenest on
  Through darkness from too far away, it comes
  That the imagining that follows, errs.
Thou wilt see plainly, if thou reachest there,
  How much the sense is cheated when far off;
  Give thyself therefore somewhat more the spur."
Then tenderly he took me by the hand,
  And said: "Before we further onward go,
  So that the fact may seem less strange to thee,
Know thou that these not towers but giants are,
  And, from the navel downward, all of them
  Are in the pit around about the bank."
As in the dissipating mist, the look
  Little by little gives its shape again
  To that which the air-thickening vapor hides,
So, piercing through the gross, dark air, as we
  Were drawing ever nearer to the brink,
  My error fled away, and my fear grew.
For as upon the round, enclosing wall
  Montereggione crowns itself with towers,
  So was the bank that winds about the pit
Set with the towers of half the very forms
  Of giants horrible, whom Jove from heaven
  Is threatening still when he is thundering.
And now I could discern of one the face,
  Shoulders and breast, and of the belly much,
  And both the arms that hung down by his sides.
Certainly Nature, when she left the art

Of creatures thus made, did exceeding well
To take such executioners from Mars;
And if she of the elephants and whales
Does not repent, whoever subtly looks
Holds her in that more just and more discreet;
For where the instrument of mind is added
Unto the evil will and to the power,
The race can make against it no defence.
His face appeared to me as long and large
As is Saint Peter's cone at Rome; and such
In their proportion were the other bones;
So that the bank, which from his middle down
Was as an apron, showed so much of him
Above it fully, that three Frieslanders
Would make ill boast to reach up to his hair.
For I could see thirty great palms of him
Downward from where one buckles on his cloak.
"Rafel mai amech zabi almi,"
Began thus crying out the savage mouth,
To which no sweeter psalms were suitable.
And toward him turned my Leader: "Foolish soul,
Keep to thy horn, and with that vent thyself
When wrath or other passion touches thee.
Seek at thy neck, and thou wilt find the cord
That holds it tied, O thou confusèd soul,
And see it curving over thy great breast."
Then said to me: "Himself is his accuser;
This is that Nimrod, through whose evil thought
One language only is not used on earth.
Leave we him standing, speak we not in vain;
For such as every language is to him,
Is his to others, which to none is known."
Therefore we made our journey longer, now
Turned to the left; and at a cross-bow shot

We found the next one, far more fierce and large.
Who could have been the master to gird him
I can not say; but he had his right arm
Pinioned behind him, and in front his left,
With such a chain as held him bound about
From the neck downward, and the uncovered part
Within a five-fold turning had enwound.
"This haughty one once willed to make the trial
Of his own power against the most high Jove,"
My Leader said, "and from it has earned this.
Ephialtes named, he made the mighty tests
When giants made the gods afraid; the arms
Which he used then, he nevermore shall move."
And I to him: "If it be possible,
I would that of immense Briareus
My eyes might have experience." Whereat
He answered: "Thou shalt see not far from here
Antaeus, who unfettered speaks, and who
Will put us at the bottom of all sin.
Much further on is he whom thou wouldst see;
And he is bound, and formed like this one, save
That in his countenance he seems more fierce."
Never was earthquake yet so violent
To shake a tower so mightily as then
Was Ephialtes, quick to shake himself.
Then feared I more than ever death, and naught
Was lacking to it save the fright alone,
If I had not beheld his twisted bonds.
We then proceeding further forward, came
Up to Antaeus, who rose full five ells,
Besides his head, above the rocky edge.
"O thou who in that valley big with fate,
That made of Scipio an heir of glory,
When Hannibal and those with him turned back,

Didst bring a thousand lions once, thy prey; 118
And who, if thou hadst been in that high war
Thy brethren waged, it seems that men think still
That Earth's sons would have been victorious; 121
Set us below,—disdain not so to do—
There where Cocytus is locked up by cold.
Make us not go to Tityus, nor Typhon; 124
This one can give of that which here is longed for;
Therefore stoop thou, and do not curl thy lip.
He in the world can yet restore thy fame, 127
For he doth live and still await long life,
If ere that time Grace call him not to her."
Thus said the Master, and that one in haste 130
Stretched out the hands, whose grip once Hercules
Felt mightily, and took my Leader up.
When Virgil felt himself thus seized, 133
He said to me: "Come hither that I may
Seize thee;" then made one bundle of us both.
As seems the Carisenda when one looks 136
Up by its sloping side when a cloud moves
So over it, that it hangs counterwise;
Such seemed Antaeus to me as I stood 139
Watching to see him stoop; the moment such,
I could have wished to go another road.
But lightly in the depth which swallows up 142
Judas with Lucifer he set us down;
Nor made he there a tarrying, thus bent,
But lifted himself up like mast in ship. 145

CANTO XXXII

Had I such verses harsh and hoarse of sound
As would be fitting for this dismal hole,
On which the other rocks all thrust their weight,

I would in greater fulness press the juice
Of my conceptions; but, as I have not,
Not without fear I bring myself to speak;
For to describe of all the universe
The bottom, is no task to take up lightly,
Nor for a tongue that "*Mamma!*" and "*Papa!*" cries.
But may those Ladies aid my verse, that gave
Aid to Amphion in enclosing Thebes,
So that the word and fact be not diverse.
Rabble beyond all others miscreated,
Now in the place, to speak of which is hard,
It were better had ye here been sheep or goats!
When we were down in the dark pit, beneath
The giant's feet, and lower yet by far,
I was still gazing at the lofty wall,
When I heard said to me: "Look to thy steps!
Go so that thou tread not beneath thy soles
The miserable, weary brothers' heads."
Whereat I turned, and saw in front of me
And underneath my feet a lake which frozen
Had semblance not of water but of glass.
So thick a veil the Danube never made
In winter for its course in Austria,
Nor yet the Don beneath yon frigid sky,
As there was here; because if Tambernich,
Or Pietrapana, down on it had fallen,
It had not given a creak, even at the edge.
And as the frog, that it may croak, will stay
With muzzle out of water, when of gleaning
The peasant-woman oftentimes will dream;
So up to where the hue of shame appears,
Livid, the woful shades were in the ice,
Setting their teeth to give the note of storks.
Each held his face turned downward; from the mouth

The cold, and from the eyes the saddened heart
Gives evidence among them of itself.
When I had looked about me for a while
I turned me to my feet, and saw there two
So close, the hair upon their heads was mixed.
"Say who ye are," said I, "who hold your breasts
So close together." And they bent their necks,
And after they had raised their looks to me,
Their eyes, which only inwardly before
Were moist, gushed o'er the lids, and cold,
Binding the tears between them, sealed them up.
Never was plank so strongly bound to plank
By clamp; and thereupon, like two he-goats,
They butted both, with anger overcome.
And one of them, who by the cold had lost
Both ears, with face still bending downward, said:
"Why dost thou gaze so fixedly at us?
If thou desirest to know who are these two,
The valley down which the Bisenzio flows
Was once their father Albert's and their own.
They issued from one body; thou mayst search
Through all Caina and thou wilt not find
A shade more worthy to be jellied fast;
Not he, of whom the breast and shadow both
One self-same blow from Arthur's hand broke through;
And not Focaccia; not this one, whose head
Obstructs me so, I can not see beyond,
Named Sassol Mascheroni. If thou art
A Tuscan, well thou know'st now who he was.
And that thou put me not to further speech,
Know I was Camicion de' Pazzi; I await
Carlino's coming to make my excuse."
Later I saw a thousand faces, grown
Dog-like through cold; whence comes to me a shudder,

And will come evermore, at frozen pools.
And as we went along toward the centre
To which all gravity collects, and I
Was shivering in the eternal cold,
If it was will or destiny or chance
I know not; but, walking among the heads
I struck my foot hard in the face of one.
Weeping it cried to me: "Why dost thou kick me?
Unless thou com'st to make the vengeance more
For Montaperti, why molest me, thou?"
And I: "My Master, now wait for me here,
That I through this one may come out of doubt;
Then thou shalt make me hasten as thou wilt."
The Leader stopped; and I said to that one
Who still kept on with cursing in his rage:
"Of what sort thou, that chidest others thus?"
"Now who art thou, that goest," he replied,
"Through Antenora, smiting others' cheeks,
So that, were I alive, it were too much?"
"I am alive, and if thou wouldst have fame,"
Was my reply, "it may be dear to thee,
I put thy name among my other notes."
And he to me: "The contrary I want;
Take thyself off; give me no more annoyance;
Ill knowest thou how to flatter in this swamp."
Then at the nape I seized him by the hair,
And said: "It shall be that thou name thyself,
Or that no hair remain upon thee here."
Whence he to me: "Though thou tear out my hair,
I will not tell thee who I am, nor show thee,
Trample a thousand times upon my head."
I had his hair now twisted in my hand
And had pulled out more than one tuft for him,
Who barked and kept his eyes held firmly down;

Then cried another: "Bocca, what ails thee?
Is it not enough thy jaws should make a noise,
Without thou bark? what devil handles thee?"
"Now," said I, "I wish not that thou shouldst speak,
Accursed traitor, for to thy disgrace
I will give tidings of thee that are true."
"Go off," he answered, "and tell what thou wilt;
But be not silent about him who now
Had such a ready tongue, if thou go forth
From here within. He is lamenting here
The Frenchmen's silver. Thou canst say, 'I saw
Him of Duera where sinners stand a-cold.'
Shouldst thou be asked who else was there, thou hast
Him of the Beccheria at thy side,
Whose gorge was cut by Florence. Farther on
Is, I believe, Gianni de' Soldanier
With Ganelon, and Tribaldello, who
Opened Faenza when its people slept."
We had already parted from that one
When I saw two so frozen in one hole,
One head was to the other as a hood;
And as one in his hunger bites his bread,
So had the upper one set in his teeth
There where the other's brain joined with his nape.
It was not otherwise than Tydeus gnawed
At Menalippus' temples for despite,
Than this one did the skull and other parts.
"O thou that showest by so bestial token
Hatred of him whom thou dost eat," said I,
"Tell me the wherefore, on condition such
That if thou rightly do complain of him,
I, knowing who ye are and what his sin,
May yet requite thee for it, up on earth,
If that, with which I speak, be not dried up."

CANTO XXXIII

Lifting his mouth up from his fell repast
That sinner wiped it on the hair upon
The head which he had at the back despoiled.
Then he began: "Thou wilt that I renew
Desperate grief, which weighs down on my heart
At the mere thought now, ere I speak of it.
But if my words shall be a seed to raise
Infamy to the traitor that I gnaw,
Thou shalt behold me speak and weep together.
I know not who thou art, nor by what mode
Down hither thou art come; but Florentine
Thou seemest verily, when I hear thee.
I was Count Ugolino, thou shalt know,
This one the archbishop Ruggieri; now
Why I am such a neighbor I will tell thee.
That through the working of his evil thoughts
I, who had put my trust in him was seized
And later put to death, need not be said.
But that which thou canst not have heard, that is,
How cruel was my death, thou shalt hear now,
And know if he has given me offence.
A narrow loop-hole in the mew, which has
From me its name of 'Hunger,' and in which
Hereafter others are to be shut up,
Had shown me now athwart its opening
Moon after moon, when I had the bad dream
Which of the future rent for me the veil.
This one appeared to me master and lord,
Chasing the wolf and whelps upon the mountain
Concealing Lucca from the Pisans' sight.
With lean hounds, that were eager and well trained,

Gualandi with Sismondi and, besides,
Lanfranchi he had put in front of him.
After short course the father and his sons
Seemed to me weary, and it seemed to me
As though I saw the sharp fangs slit their flanks.
When I before the morrow was awake,
I could hear how my sons who were with me,
Were moaning in their sleep, asking for bread.
Cruel indeed art thou, if now thou grieve not
To think of the forebodings of my heart;
What dost thou weep at if thou weep not now?
They were awake, and now the time drew near
When commonly the food was brought to us,
And each was in suspense about his dream;
And then the horrible tower's door below
I heard nailed up; whereat without a word
I looked into the faces of my sons.
I wept not, so to stone I turned within;
They wept, and my poor little Anselm said:
'Thou gazest so; father, what aileth thee?'
But I shed not a tear, nor answered I
Through all that day, nor the night after it,
Until the next sun came forth on the world.
When now a little beam had made its way
Into the woful prison and I caught
My very aspect in four faces, then
Both of my hands for grief I bit, and they,
Thinking that I had done it through desire
Of eating, suddenly rose up, and said:
'Father, much less will be our pain, if thou
Wilt eat of us; it is thou didst clothe us with
This wretched flesh, and do thou strip it off.'
I calmed me then not to make them more sad,
And that day and the next we all stayed dumb.

Ah, why didst thou not open, thou hard earth?
And after we had come to the fourth day
At my feet Gaddo threw himself stretched out,
Saying: 'My father, why dost thou not help me?'
He died there; and as thou seest me, I saw
The three fall one by one between the fifth
And sixth days; whereupon I set myself,
Already blind, to groping over each,
And two days called them, after they were dead;
Then fasting was more powerful than grief."
When he had said this, with his eyes awry
He seized the wretched skull again with teeth
That were upon the bone strong as a dog's.
Ah, Pisa, thou dishonor of the peoples
Of the fair country where the *si* doth sound,
Since those near by are slow to punish thee,
Let both Caprara and Gorgona move
And make a hedge for Arno at its mouth
So that it drown all living souls in thee.
For though Count Ugolino had the name
Of traitor to thee in thy fortresses,
Thou shouldest not have put to such a cross
His sons; for their young age made Uguccione
And Il Brigata innocent, thou Thebes
Today, and those two whom my song has named.
We passed now further on to where the ice
Ruggedly wraps another people in,
Not downward bent, but wholly backward thrown.
The very weeping hinders weeping there;
The grief, which finds obstruction in their eyes,
Turns inward to increase their suffering;
Because the tears first flowing form a mass;
And like to crystal vizors they fill up
Beneath the eyebrows all the cavity.

Although all feeling now because of cold
  Had ceased within my features to abide,
  As in a callous place, it seemed to me
That I felt now a wind; whereat I said:
  "My Master, who is causing this to move?
  For is not here below all vapor quenched?"
He thereupon to me: "Anon shalt thou
  Be where thine eye shall answer this for thee,
  Beholding that which makes the blast rain down."
And one among the wretched cried to us
  From that cold crust: "O ye so cruel souls
  That the last station has been given you,
Remove for me the hard veils from my face,
  That I may vent the grief that swells my heart,
  Somewhat, before the weeping freeze again."
Whence I to him: "If thou wilt that I aid thee,
  Say who thou art; if I relieve thee not,
  May I go to the bottom of the ice."
He answered then: "I am Fra Alberigo;
  He of the fruits am I, of that bad garden,
  And am here getting back dates for my figs."
"Oh!" said I to him, "art already dead?"
  And he to me: "How, in the world above,
  My body fares, I have no knowledge here.
This Ptolomea has such privilege,
  That oftentimes the soul will fall down hither
  Ere Atropos has given it a thrust.
And that thou mayst more willingly remove
  The glassy tears from off my face, know thou
  That from the moment that the soul betrays
As I did, does a demon seize upon
  Her body, and thereafter governs it
  Until its time completely be revolved.
She plunges to the cistern fashioned thus;

Perhaps the body still appears above
Of this shade here, behind me wintering.
Thou must know him, if thou cam'st down just now:
He is Ser Branca d' Oria; many years
Have passed away since he was thus shut up."
"Thou art deceiving me, I think," said I,
"For Branca d' Oria is by no means dead,
But eats and drinks and sleeps and puts on clothes."
"The ditch of Malebranche up above,"
Said he, "there where doth boil the sticky pitch,
Had Michel Zanche not yet reached, before
This one had left a devil in his stead
In his own body; in his kinsman's, too,
Who did the treachery along with him.
But stretch thy hand now hither; open thou
My eyes;" and I for him opened them not,
And to be rude to him was courtesy.
Ah, Genoese, ye men estranged from all
Right living, and of all corruption full,
Why are ye not scattered from off the earth?
For with Romagna's basest spirit I
Found such an one of you as for his deeds
Already in Cocytus bathes his soul,
And seems a living body still above.

CANTO XXXIV

"VEXILLA *regis prodeunt inferni*
Toward us; therefore see in front of them,"
My Master said, "if thou discernest him."
As when thick fog is breathing, or as when
Our hemisphere is passing into night,
Appears far off a mill which the wind turns:

E'en such a structure I appeared to see,
And shrank behind my Leader, for the wind,
Because there was no other shelter there.
I was now where—with fear I give it rhythm—
The shades are wholly covered up, and like
A straw in glass, shone through; and some of them
Are lying down, and others stand up straight;
One on his head, another on his soles;
One like a bow, his face bends to his feet.
When we had made our way so far ahead,
That it now pleased my Master to show me
The one created with so fair a form,
He from before me took himself, and made
Me stop, saying: "Lo Dis, and lo the place
Where thou must arm thyself with fortitude."
How I became then frozen and grew hoarse,
Ask me not, reader, for I write it not,
Because but little were all use of words.
I died not, nor did I remain alive;
Think for thyself now, if thou hast a grain
Of wit, what I became, deprived of both.
He, of the realm of woe the emperor,
Stood from the middle of his breast above
The ice; and better with a giant I
Compare, than do the giants with his arms;
See now of how great size that whole must be,
That with a part so fashioned is conformed.
If he was beautiful as he is foul
And did against his Maker lift his brows,
It well befits that all grief come from him.
Oh, how great seemed the marvel to me when
Upon his head three faces I beheld!
One was in front, and that was crimson-hued,
The others, two that were adjoined to this

Above the very middle of each shoulder;
And at the place where was the crest they met;
'Twixt white and yellow was the right; the left
Was such to look upon as theirs who come
From whence the Nile descends. Beneath each one
There were put forth two mighty wings of size
Such as was fitting for so great a bird;
Sails on the sea I never saw so large.
They had no feathers, but their fashion was
Like to a bat's; and he was flapping them
So that three winds were moving out from him.
Thereby Cocytus wholly turned to ice.
With six eyes wept he; over his three chins
Trickled the bloody drivel and the tears.
In each mouth he was mangling with his teeth
A sinner, as a heckle would have done,
So that he thus made woful three of them.
For to the one in front the biting was
Naught to the clawing, for at times his back
Remained with all the skin stripped off from it.
"That soul up there with greatest punishment,"
The Master said, "Judas Iscariot is;
His head within, outside he plies his legs.
Of the two others who have their heads down,
Brutus is he who hangs from that black mouth;
See how he writhes and utters not a word;
Cassius the other, who seems so large of limb.
But night again is rising, and we now
Must needs depart, for we have seen the whole."
As he desired, I clasped him round the neck,
And then he seized the fitting time and place,
And when the wings were open wide enough,
He caught hold fast upon the shaggy sides;
From shag to shag down he descended then

Between the thick hair and the frozen crusts.
When we had reached the place where turns the thigh
Exactly on the thickness of the haunch,
The Leader, laboring and breathing hard,
Turned his head there where he had had his legs,
And grappled to the hair as one who mounts,
So that I thought us turning back to hell.
"Keep thou good hold, because by stairs made thus,"
The Master said, panting like one fatigued,
"From so great evil we must needs depart."
Then issuing through the opening of a rock,
He put me on the edge of it to sit;
Afterwards stretched his wary step toward me.
I raised my eyes and thought that I should see
Lucifer's form as I had left it placed,
But saw him with his legs held upward now;
And if I then became perplexed in mind,
Those who are gross may think, who do not see
What was the point that I had passed beyond.
"Rise up," the Master said, "upon thy feet;
The way is long, the road is difficult;
Already to mid-tierce the sun returns."
It was not of a palace the great hall
There where we were, rather a prison-house
Of nature, both ill-paved and lacking light.
"Before I tear myself from the abyss,
My Master," said I, when once risen up,
"To draw me out of error, speak a little.
Where is the ice, and how is this one fixed
Thus upside down? and how in so short time,
Has the sun transit made from eve to morn?"
And he to me: "Thou still imaginest
Thyself beyond the centre where I seized
The hair of the fell Worm, piercing the world.

On that side wast thou when I made descent;
  And when I turned me thou didst pass the point
  To which are drawn from every side the weights;
Now thou art come beneath the hemisphere
  Opposite that by which the great dry land
  Is covered, and beneath whose weight consumed
Was He, whose birth and life were without sin.
  Thou hast thy feet upon a little sphere,
  Here forming the Judecca's other face.
Here it is morning when it is evening yonder;
  This one, who made our ladder of his hair,
  Is still fixed, even as he was before.
On this side fell he down from out of heaven,
  And earth, before spread out upon this side,
  For fear of him made of the sea a veil,
And came to our hemisphere; and to escape
  Perchance from him, what on this side appears
  Left here the vacant place, and rushed up back."
A place is there below, distant as far
  As from Beelzebub his tomb extends,
  Which not by sight but by the sound is known
Of a small stream, that here descends along
  The hollow of a rock which it has worn
  With flowing down its winding, gentle slope.
That hidden way the Leader and myself
  Entered upon, to the bright world returning;
  And with no care of having any rest
We mounted, he first and I second, up
  So far that I through a round opening
  Beheld the things of beauty heaven bears;
Thence we came forth again to see the stars.

PURGATORIO

PURGATORIO

CANTO I

To run o'er better waters now hoists sail
The little vessel of my genius as
She leaves behind her such a cruel sea;
And of that second realm I sing wherein
The human spirit purifies itself
And so grows worthy to ascend to heaven.
But grant, O holy Muses, whose am I,
That here dead poesy may rise again;
And here may too Calliope somewhat
Arise, and join unto my song that note
The stroke of which the wretched Picae felt
And knew there was no pardon evermore.
Sweet color, like an orient sapphire's, now
Was gathering within the sky, serene
From the clear zenith to the primal round,
And brought again delight unto my eyes
As soon as I came forth from that dead air,
Which had been grievous both to eyes and breast;
And the fair planet which incites to love
Was making all the eastern sky to laugh,
Veiling the Fishes that were in her train.
Toward the right hand turning I observed
The other pole, and saw four stars that yet
Were never seen but by the primal race.
The heavens seemed rejoicing in their flames.

O region of the north, widowed art thou,
For thou hast been deprived of sight of these!
When I from gazing at them had withdrawn
And turned a little to the other pole,
Where now the Wain was no more to be seen,
I saw near by me an old man, alone,
In aspect worthy of such reverence,
That more was ne'er due sire from a son.
Long was his beard and mingled with white hair,
In manner like unto his locks, of which
A double list fell downward on his breast.
The rays of these four holy lights adorned
His countenance with such a glow, it seemed
That I looked on as 'twere a sun before me.
"Pray, who are ye, that up the hidden stream
Have made escape from the eternal prison?"
Said he, and moved those honorable plumes.
"Who was your guide? Who was your lantern hence,
As ye came forth from out that night profound,
Which leaves the infernal valley ever black?
Are then the laws of Hell so broken, or
Is there in Heaven some new counsel taken,
Whereby ye damned come hither to my rocks?"
And then my Leader, taking hold of me,
With words and with his hand and tokening
Made reverential both my brow and knee.
Then answered he: "I came not of myself;
A Lady came from Heaven, at whose bidding
I aided this one with my company.
But since thy will is that our true estate
Shall now be more unfolded to thy ken,
Mine can not be that thou shouldst be denied.
This man has not yet seen his last day close,
But by his folly was so near to it

That very little time there was to turn.
As I have told thee, I was sent to him
To rescue him, nor was there other way
Than this upon which I have set myself.
The wicked I have shown him, and I now
Would show those spirits that do undergo
Their purifying in thy guardianship.
How I have led him would be long to tell:
Know from above comes down the helpful power
That guides him hither to thy sight and voice.
So may his coming please thee, for he lives
In search of liberty, which is so dear,
As he well knows who spurns his life for it.
Thou know'st, to whom death for it was not bitter
In Utica where thou didst leave that robe,
Which on the Great Day shall be found so bright.
The everlasting edicts we break not:
He is alive, and Minos binds not me;
I am a dweller in that circle where
Are Marcia's chaste eyes, whose look still prays
That thou, O holy breast, wilt keep her thine.
For her love then incline thyself to us.
Grant us to journey through thy seven realms:
I will report thy grace to her, if thou
Still deignest to be mentioned there below."
"While I was yonder," he made answer, "so
Was Marcia pleasant in my eyes, that all
The favor that she wished I did for her.
But as she dwells beyond the evil stream,
She cannot move me longer, by that law
Made when I issued thence. But if of Heaven
A Lady moves and governs thee, thou say'st,
There is no need of soft words; let it be
Enough that thou for her requirest me.

Go then, and see that thou do gird this one
With a smooth rush, and that thou wash his face
So that all stain be wiped away from it;
For it were not becoming that the eye,
O'ertaken by a cloud, should go before
The first of them that serve in Paradise.
This little island at the very base,
Down yonder where the waters beat on it,
Has rushes growing from the yielding ooze.
No other plant that should put forth a leaf
Or should grow hard could there maintain its life,
If it bent not before the beating waves.
And afterwards return not hither; lo,
The sun is rising, and will show you where
A gentler slope shall lead you up the Mount."
Therewith he disappeared; and I arose,
And saying naught drew very close to him,
My Leader, and to him raised up my eyes.
"My son," so he began, "follow my steps;
Here turn we backward, for on this side slopes
This plain to its low-lying boundaries."
The dawn was conquering the morning hour
In flight before it now, so that afar
I could discern the tremor of the sea.
We went along the lonely plain like one
Who turns to find the path that he had lost,
And till he finds it seems to walk in vain.
When we had reached a place where still the dew
Strives with the sun, but for still being in
A place of shade is slow to disappear,
Then both his hands my Master gently spread
And put them down upon the tender grass;
And I, who was aware of his intent,
Held forth toward him my cheeks all stained with tears.

Then he brought back, uncovered wholly now,
That color of my face which Hell had hidden.
We came at last upon the desert shore,
Which never yet had seen its waters sailed
By craft of man who afterwards returned.
There he so girded me as pleased the other;
O marvel! for no sooner had he culled
The lowly plant, than suddenly there sprang
Another like it whence it had been plucked.

CANTO II

The sun had now to this horizon mounted,
Whose noonday circle at its highest point
Sweeps through the zenith of Jerusalem;
And night which circles opposite to him
Was issuing from the Ganges with the Scales
Which fall from her hands' grasp when she exceeds;
So that the beautiful Aurora's cheeks,
Where I was then, began to change from white
And red to orange from oncoming age.
We still were there beside the sea, like those
Who think about the road and with the heart
Go forward while the body tarries still,
When lo! as, at the coming of the day,
Through the thick vapors Mars glows red afar
Within the west above the ocean floor,
Appeared,—and may I see it yet again!—
A light that came so swiftly o'er the sea
That like its motion there was never flight;
And when I had withdrawn my gaze from it
A little only to interrogate
My Leader, it had brighter, larger grown.

Then on each side of it appeared to me
A something white, I knew not what; beneath
Came slowly forth another whiteness still.
My Master uttered not a word until
The first white gleams appeared the wings they were;
Then, when he clearly knew the pilot, called:
"Bend thou thy knees, bend thou thy knees! it is
God's Angel! Fold thy hands! Henceforth thou seest
Such doers of the holy offices!
See how he scorns the instruments of men,
And will not use an oar, or other sail
Than his own wings between such distant shores!
See how he holds them pointed up to heaven,
Beating the air with his eternal feathers,
That are not moulted as upon the earth!"
Then as he near and nearer drew to us,
The winged one of God more bright appeared,
So that my eyes no longer bore the sight,
But were perforce bent down. He came to shore
With vessel of such swiftness and so light
The waters had not swallowed it at all;
And at the stern the heavenly Pilot stood
Like one whose blessedness is writ in heaven;
While more than five score spirits sat within.
In exitu Israel de Egypto
They were together singing with one voice
With all that more is written in that psalm;
And then he made the sign of Holy Cross,
Whereat they cast themselves upon the strand,
And he, as he had come, was swift to go.
The huddling throng remaining in that place
Seemed very strange to it, and gazed around
Like one who makes essay of novel things.
The sun was darting now on every side

The arrows of the day, and with their glow
Had chased the Goat from the mid-heaven's height,
When the new people lifted up their brows
To us, and said: "If it so be ye know,
Show us the way to follow to the Mount."
And Virgil answered them: "Perchance ye think
That we have had experience of this place;
But we are pilgrims, even as yourselves.
We came but now, a little ere ye came,
Another way that was so rough and hard
That climbing hence will be but play to us."
The souls that had become aware of me
Because I breathed and so was living still
Grew pallid at the miracle; and then,
As to a messenger with olive-branch
Men press on earth to hear the news he brings
And are not loath to tread on those before,
So on my countenance those happy souls
Were there with gaze affixed, each one, as if
This journey to grow fair were all forgot.
Among them I saw one press forward so
As if for love to throw his arms about me,
That I was moved to do the like to him.
O shades! how empty, save in show! Three times
I clasped my hands behind it, and three times
I drew them empty to my breast again.
My color showed my wonder, I believe,
Because the shade then smiled as it drew back;
And I pressed on, as if to follow it.
Gently it bade me pause, and so I knew
Whose form it was; and I besought him then
That he would stay a while and speak with me.
He answered me: "As in my mortal frame
I loved you, still I love you, freed from it.

Therefore I stay; but thou, why journeyest thou?"
"This journey, my Casella, I have made
That I may yet another time return,"
I said; "but who has robbed thee of thy time?"
And he to me: "No one has done me wrong,
Though he who takes both whom and when he will
Has many times denied me passage hither;
For of a just will is his own composed.
For three months now in truth he has brought o'er
With perfect peace whoever willed to come.
So I, who had at that time turned my way
To that sea-shore where Tiber's flood grows salt,
Benignantly by him was gathered in.
To reach that mouth his wing is now intent,
Because collecting ever there are they
Whose downward way leads not to Acheron."
And I: "If some new law deprives thee not
Of memory and thy voicing of love's song
Which once would quiet in me all desires,
Be pleased to let it solace yet once more
My soul, which leaving not its outward form,
Has hither come in such great weariness."
Love, which discourses in my mind with me,
Began he then to sing so sweetly, that
The sweetness of it ever in me sounds.
My Master and myself and all that were
About him there seemed so content, as if
Naught else were in the mind of any one.
We were all standing fixedly intent
Upon his notes, when lo! the grave old man
Crying: "Ye laggard spirits, what is this?
What negligence? What standing still is this?
Run to the Mount to strip you of the slough,
Which lets not God be manifest to you!"

As when the doves are feeding in a flock
And, picking up the grain or tares, are still
And make no showing of their wonted pride,
If anything appear and cause them fright,
They suddenly abandon all their food
Because they are assailed by greater care;
So did I see this troop, but newly come,
Leaving the song, and going toward the slope
As one who goes, nor knows where leads his way;
Nor was our leaving slower than was theirs.

CANTO III

Although the sudden flight had scattered so
These souls about the plain, and turned again
Toward the Mount, where reason is our spur,
I drew the nearer to my true companion;
And how should I have sped without him, or
Who would have led me upward o'er the Mount?
He seemed to me remorseful for himself;
O noble conscience, void of all offence,
How bitter is the sting of little faults!
And when his feet no longer moved in haste
That robs of dignity all acts, my mind
Which was restrained before, was now set free
To follow its intent with eagerness;
I set my face to go toward the hill,
Which rises highest heavenward from the sea.
The sunlight, flaming ruddy at my back,
Was broken now before me in the shape,
In which I caused the stopping of the rays.
I turned me to one side with fear lest I
Had been abandoned, when I saw the earth

Was darkened there before myself alone:
And he, my comfort, turning wholly round,
Began: "Why dost thou still distrust? dost thou
Not trust that I am with thee, and thy guide?
It is already evening there where lies
The body buried in which I cast a shadow;
For Naples holds it, from Brundusium brought.
And if no shadow falls before me now,
Wonder no more at it than at the heavens,
Whose rays are not impeded each by each.
To suffer torments both of heat and cold
Bodies like these are by that Power ordained,
Which wills not that its ways be known to us;
And mad is he who hopes our reason may
E'er follow after through infinity
The paths One Substance in Three Persons takes.
Be then content, mankind, with 'So it is;'
For if ye had been able to see all,
There were no need that Mary should give birth;
And ye have seen how fruitlessly they longed
That this desire might be gratified,
Which has become to them eternal grief.
I speak of Aristotle and of Plato
And many more." And then he ceased to speak,
Remaining troubled, with his head bowed down.
We had attained meanwhile the mountain's base;
But there we found the cliff so steep to scale
That all in vain the legs would there be nimble.
'Twixt Lerici and where Turbìa lies,
The most deserted, lonely path is as
An easy, open stairway unto this.
"Now who knows on which hand the side slopes down,"
Then said my Master, as he stayed his steps,
"So that one may ascend, though he lack wings?"

And while he was still there with eyes cast down
And pondering the way within his mind,
And I was looking up about the rocks,
On the left hand appeared to me a throng
Of souls that moved their feet toward us, and yet
Seemed not to move, so slowly were they coming.
"Master," I said, "lift up thine eyes and see
On this side some one who may give us counsel,
If thou canst not now find it of thyself."
He looked at them, and with glad mien replied:
"They come so slowly, let us go to them,
And may thy hope be strengthened, my sweet son."
While yet that people were as far away,
(After we took, I mean, some thousand steps)
As could be reached by a good slinger's throw,
They all were pressing nearer to the mass
Of that hard, lofty cliff, so close and still
As one who walks in doubt, and stops to look.
"O ye, whose end was good," Virgil began,
"Spirits elect, now tell us by that peace,
Which I believe awaits each one of you,
Where is it that the mountain falls away,
So that the going up is possible?
For who knows most dislikes most to lose time."
As sheep that come forth from the fold by ones,
By twos, by threes, while all the others stand,
Timidly holding eye and nose to earth,
And what the first one does the others do,
Huddling so close to her, if she but stop,
Silly and quiet, and they know not why;
So saw I move, as if to come to us,
The head of that blest flock, in countenance
Modest of mien, in motion dignified.
When those who were in front saw that the light

Was broken on the ground at my right side
So that my shadow fell toward the rock,
They stopped and drew themselves a little back; 91
And all the others that came after them,
Not knowing why, yet did the same as they.
"Before your question, I make known to you 94
This is a human body that ye see,
By which the sun's light on the ground is cleft.
I pray you, marvel not; believe that not 97
Without a power that comes down from heaven
He now is seeking to surmount this wall."
So spoke my Master; and that worthy band 100
Replied: "Turn then; before us enter in," [signs.
And with the backs of hands stretched forth made
And one of them began: "Whoe'er thou art, 103
Do thou, who goest onward, turn thy face,
To note if thou didst ever see me yonder."
I turned, and looked upon him fixedly; 106
Fair-haired he was, and fair to look upon,
But for one eyebrow that a blow had cleft.
When I with due humility disclaimed 109
That I had ever seen him, "Look," said he,
And pointed to a wound above his breast.
Then he said smiling: "I am Manfred, son 112
Of Empress Constance' son; wherefore, I pray,
Whenever thou returnest to the world,
Go thou to my fair daughter, who brought forth 115
The glory of Sicily and Aragon,
Tell her the truth, despite what others say.
After my body was twice broken in 118
By deadly thrusts, I gave myself in tears
Unto that One who gladly pardons us.
My sins were horrible, but infinite 121
Is Goodness, whose great arms outstretched receive

Each one of those who turn to it again.
If he whom Clement sent to hunt me down,
The Pastor of Cosenza, had but known
How to read then the page of God aright,
My body's bones would still be lying there
Near by the head of Benevento's bridge,
Within the keeping of the heavy cairn.
Now the rain bathes and the wind drives them forth
From out the realm hard by the Verde's banks,
Whither he had them borne with tapers quenched.
But by their curse a man is not so lost
That love eternal cannot come again,
If only hope have still the slightest green.
In truth whoe'er in contumacy dies
Of Holy Church, though he at last repent,
Must stay outside these bounds full thirty-fold
The measure of the time which he had passed
In his presumption, if good prayers work not
The shortening of this decreed delay.
See how hereafter thou canst make me happy,
Wouldst thou to my good Constance both reveal
How thou hast seen me, and too this decree;
Great is the help that comes through those on earth."

CANTO IV

Whenever through delights or pains received
By some one faculty of ours the soul
Collects itself for that one thoroughly,
It seems to give no heed to other power;
And this, against that error which believes
One soul above another burns in us.
And therefore, when a thing is heard or seen,

Which keeps the soul turned to it mightily,
Time passes, and the soul has paid no heed.
One power is it, that is listening,
Another, that which keeps the soul entire;
The latter, as it were, fast bound, the former loose.
Of that I had a true experience,
Hearing that spirit's words, and marveling.
For fifty full degrees the sun had climbed
And I had not become aware of it,
When we had come to where those souls cried out
As with one voice: "Behold here what ye asked."
The countryman, when grapes are turning brown,
With but a little forkful of his thorns
Will often cram a larger opening
Than was the gap, through which we mounted up,
My Leader and I after him, alone,
When once the troop had taken leave of us.
San Leo can be reached, and one goes down
To Noli, or yet scales Bismantova
With only feet, but here one needs to fly.
I mean with the swift wings and with the feathers
Of great desire behind that leadership,
Which gave me hope, and made a light for me.
We were still climbing through the rocky cleft
With on each side a wall that hemmed us in,
And ground beneath that called for feet and hands,
And had already reached the topmost edge
Of this high bank out on the open slope;
"My Master," said I, "what way shall we take?"
And he to me: "No step of thine be downward!
But up the Mount behind me win thy way,
Till some wise escort shall appear to us."
The lofty summit was above our sight,
And here the mountain's flank rose steeper far

Than from a centre the mid-quadrant line.
Weary was I when I began to say:
"O my sweet Father, turn thee and regard
How I remain alone, if thou stay not!"
"My son," he answered, "draw thyself up here,"
And pointed out a little higher up
A ledge, that here encircled all the hill.
The words he uttered then so spurred me on
To force myself, that creeping after him
I had this girdle underneath my feet.
And there we stopped, and both of us sat down,
Turned to the east, whence we had made the ascent;
For looking back is wont to give us cheer.
And first I turned my eyes to the low shores;
Then raised them to the sun, and wondered much
That we were struck by it upon the left.
The Poet noted well how I stood there
Astonished at the chariot of the sun,
Passing its way between us and the north.
Wherefore he said: "If with the mirror yonder,
Which sends its light upward and downward both,
Castor and Pollux were in company,
Then thou wouldst see the ruddy Zodiac
Revolving closer to the Bears, unless
It had departed from its ancient path.
If thou wouldst fain conceive how this must be,
With thoughts collected picture Zion placed
So with this mountain on the earth, that both
Have one horizon, and their hemispheres
Diverse, so that the road which Phaëthon
To his destruction knew not how to drive,
Must needs pass by the mountain on one side,
And that one on the other, thou shalt find,
If so thy intellect is clear and heeds."

"Assuredly, my Master, never yet,"
Said I, "have I discerned so well as now,
There where my power of mind seemed fallen short,
That the mid-circle of the heavenly motion,
Called the Equator in a certain science
And ever biding 'twixt the sun and winter,
Is, as thou reasonest, as far from here
Towards the north, as were the Hebrews wont
To see it in the region of the heat.
But if it please thee, I would gladly learn
How far we have to go, because the hill
Rises still higher than my eyes can reach."
And he replied to me: "Such is this Mount,
That it is ever hard to climb below,
And pains the less, the higher one ascends.
Therefore, as soon as it shall seem to thee
So pleasant, that it is as slight a task
To scale it, as the floating down a stream,
Then shalt thou be at this path's end; and there
Expect to find repose for weariness.
No more I answer; this I know for true."
And when he had ceased speaking, lo, a voice
Near by us sounded: "It may be that thou,
To sit thee down beforehand, shalt have need."
At sound of it we each of us turned round,
And saw upon the left a massive stone,
Which neither he nor I perceived before.
And when we went to it, persons were there
Reposing in the shade behind the rock,
As one will indolently settle down.
And one of them, who seemed so weary there,
Was seated on the ground, and clasped his knees,
Holding his face between them buried low.
"O sweet my lord," said I, "now cast thine eye

On him who shows himself more indolent
Than if Sloth were his very sister born."
Then turned he to us, and as he gave heed,
Moving his look only along his thigh,
He said: "Now go thou up, for thou art valiant."
I knew then who he was; and weariness,
Which still was quickening somewhat my breath,
Prevented not my going up to him.
And when I reached him, scarcely raised he up
His head, saying: "Hast truly seen the sun
At thy left shoulder drive his chariot?"
His lazy acts and the few words he used
First moved my lips somewhat to smile, and then,
"Belacqua," I began, "henceforth I grieve
For thee no more; but tell me why thou art
Seated just here; awaitest thou a guide,
Or hast thou but resumed thy wonted ways?"
And he: "Brother, of what good to go up?
The Winged One of God beside the gate
Would not let me go on to torments then.
Outside of it the heavens first must turn
About me as long time as was my life,
Because I sighed not well till the end of it,
If prayers come not beforehand to my aid,
Sprung from a heart that still survives in grace;
What profits other prayer, unheard in heaven?"
Already was the Poet mounting up
Before me, saying: "Come! for now thou seest
The sun meridian high; and from the bank
Upon Morocco falls the foot of night."

CANTO V

I HAD already parted from those shades
And followed in the footsteps of my guide,
When, pointing with his finger, one cried out
Behind me: "See, the light seems not to shine
Upon the left of that one lower down,
And he appears to act as if alive."
On hearing these words said I turned my eyes,
And saw them looking, wondering, at me,
At me alone, and at the broken light.
"Why is thy spirit so entangled," said
My Master, "that thou slackenest thy pace?
Or how concerns thee what is whispered here?
Follow thou me, and let the people talk;
Stand like a tower firm, that never shakes
Its summit at the blowing of the winds.
For he e'er moves his mark still further off,
Within whom thought is springing after thought,
Because the one makes less the other's power."
What could I say in answer but "I come"?
And so I said, with face of such a hue
As sometimes makes one merit pardoning.
Meanwhile across the mountain-side there came
People in front of us a little space,
Chanting the Miserere verse by verse.
When they perceived my body gave no place
To passing of the rays, they changed their song
Into an "Oh," both long drawn out and hoarse.
And two of them in form of messengers
Ran forth to meet us, and then asked of us:
"Make us acquainted, pray, with your condition."
"Ye may go back," my Master said to them,

"And thus report to those who bade you come,
That this man's body is of very flesh.
If, as I deem, they stopped because they saw
His shadow, they are answered; let them pay
Him honor, and he may be dear to them."
Enkindled vapors I have never seen
At early night so swift to cleave the sky,
Or clouds in August when the sun goes down,
That they returned not upward in less time;
And, joined by the others there, wheeled round to us
Like a troop running forward without check.
"This folk, that presses to us now, is large,
And come to beg thine aid," the poet said;
"But still go on, and listen as thou goest."
"O soul, that art upon thy way to joy
With members that thou hadst when thou wast born,"
They came on, crying, "stay thy steps a while.
Look, if thou ever sawest one of us,
So that thou mayst take yonder news of him.
Oh, why dost thou go on? Oh, why not stay?
We all had met our death by violence,
And till the latest hour were in our sins;
Then light from heaven shone upon us so,
That, penitent and pardoning, we came
Forth from that life at peace with God; so that
He fills our hearts with longing for His sight."
"Although I gaze upon your faces, none
I recognize," said I; "but if I may
Please you in aught I can, spirits well-born,
Then speak, and I will do it by that peace,
Which, following the steps of such a guide
Makes me go searching it from world to world."
And one began: "Each one of us has trust
In thy good offices without thine oath,

If lack of power cut not off the will.
So I, who speak alone before the rest,
Would pray thee, if thou e'er shalt see the land
That 'twixt Romagna lies and that of Charles,
That thou in Fano courteously beseech
That their good prayers be offered up for me,
That I may purge away my heavy sins.
There I was born; but the deep wounds from which
Came forth the blood, in which I had my seat,
Were dealt me embosomed with the Antenors,
Amidst whom I believed myself more sure.
That one of Este had it done, who raged
Against me far beyond what justice willed.
If only toward La Mira, when I was
Surprised at Oriaco, I had fled,
I should be yonder still with those who breathe.
I ran to the marshes, and the reeds and mire
So hindered me, I fell; and then I saw
A pool made from my veins upon the ground."
Then said another: "As I pray thou mayst
Have that desire which draws thee to the Mount,
Do thou with kindly pity aid in mine.
I was of Montefeltro, am Buonconte;
Nor Joan, nor any other, cares for me;
Therefore I go with these of downcast brow."
And I to him: "What was the force or chance
Led thee so far from Campaldino's field,
That men have never known thy burial-place?"
"Oh," answered he, "at Casentino's foot
A stream, the Archiano, crosses, born
In the Apennine above the Hermitage.
To that place where its name grows void, I had
Made my way on, deep-wounded in the throat,
Fleeing on foot and bloodying the plain.

There I could see no longer, and my speech
Ended with Mary's name; and there I fell.
My flesh alone remained. I speak the truth;
Among the living tell it thus again:
God's Angel seized me, and the one from Hell
Cried: 'Thou of Heaven, why dost thou rob me so?
Thou bearest hence this man's immortal part;
One petty tear is taking him from me;
But I will deal with the other otherwise.'
Thou knowest well how in the air collects
That humid vapor, which to water turns,
Whene'er it mounts where cold envelops it.
That evil will, that seeks alone the ill,
He joined to thought, and moved the mist and wind
By power that his nature gave to him;
As day was spent, he overspread the vale
From Pratomagno to the mountain chain
With clouds, and made the sky above so dense,
The pregnant air was turned to water; then
The rain came down; the water-courses took
That part of it which earth could not endure;
And as it came together in great streams,
Toward the royal river it rushed on
So swiftly, there was nothing held it back.
My body cold as ice, near by its mouth
The raging Archiano found, and thrust
Into the Arno; loosed my bosom's cross,
That with my arms I made when pain o'ercame me;
Along its banks and bed it rolled me, till
It covered me, and girt me with its spoil."
"Pray, when thou art returned unto the world,
And art from thy long journey rested, then,"
The third soul followed on the second's words,
"Think thou of Pia, whom Siena made,

And whom Maremma unmade, as he knows
Who with the gem set in the ring took me
Before that day to be his wedded wife."

CANTO VI

As when the game of dice is broken up,
He who has lost remains behind and grieves,
Recalling all the throws, and sadly learns,
The other moves away with all the throng,
This one in front, and that one seizing him
Behind, and this one brings himself to mind
Beside him, he stays not, yet notes it all;
And he to whom he stretches out his hand
Stops crowding, and he so escapes the press:
Such I was in that thronging multitude,
As I turned here and there my face to them,
And by my promising made my escape.
Here was the Aretine, who by the arms
Of savage Ghin di Tacco met his death;
And he who running in pursuit was drowned;
And here Novello's Federigo prayed
With hands outstretched, and he of Pisa, who
Made good Marzucco seem so strong of heart.
I saw Count Orso; and the soul that hate
And envy parted from its body, not,
Men said, for any sin itself had done,
Pierre de la Brosse's; and let her take care,
The Lady of Brabant, while still she lives,
That she come not for that to flock still worse.
When I was free again from all these shades,
Who only pray that others pray for them,
That they the sooner come to saintliness,

Thus I began: "To me it seems that thou, 28
My Light, expressly in one place deniest,
That prayer may cause decree of heaven to bend;
And yet these people all do pray for this. 31
Or might it be, then, that their hope is vain?
Or are thy words not duly clear to me?"
And he to me: "Both is my writing clear, 34
And, too, the hope of these is not deceived,
If it be well examined with sound mind.
The peak of justice bends not to the vale, 37
Because Love's fire may in an instant work
The satisfaction due from each one here;
And there, where I affirmed this, the defect 40
Was not by praying remedied; because
That was, forsooth, a prayer disjoined from God.
But upon matters of such lofty doubt 43
Fix not thy mind, unless she bid thee to,
Who shall be light 'twixt truth and intellect.
I know not if thou understand; I speak 46
Of Beatrice, whom on this mountain's top
Thou shalt see smiling in her happiness."
And I: "My Lord, let us make greater haste, 49
For now I grow not weary as before;
And see, the slope is casting shadow now."
"We shall go forward with this day as far," 52
He answered me, "as shall be in our power.
But otherwise the fact is than thou deemest;
Before thou art up there, he shall return, 55
Who now is hidden by the hillside so
That thou no longer dost obstruct his rays.
But yonder see a soul, who all apart 58
Is stationed as he casts his looks on us;
He will point out to us the quickest way."
We came to him. O Lombard soul, how proud 61

And all disdainful wert thou, standing there!
How grave and slow wert thou to move thine eyes!
And saying nothing to us, suffered us
To go our way, and only fixed his gaze
Upon us as a couching lion would.
But Virgil, drawing near to him, besought
That he might show to us the best ascent;
And he made no reply to his request,
But of our country and our life instead
He questioned us. The gentle Leader then:
"Mantua—" and the shade, all in itself recluse,
Sprang toward him from the place where it had been,
Saying: "O Mantuan, I am Sordello,
Of thine own land." And they embraced each other.
O servile Italy! hostel of grief!
Ship without pilot in great tempest, not
Mistress of provinces, but brothel-house!
How ready was that gentle soul to give
At the sweet mention of his city's name
A joyous welcome to its citizen!
But now thy living men cannot exist
Without a war, and each man gnaws his neighbor,
Of those whom one wall and one moat shut in.
Search, wretched one, thy borders by the sea,
And then look in thy bosom, if there be
Within thee any part enjoying peace.
What good comes, if Justinian readjust
Thy bridle, and thy saddle be not filled?
If that had never been, thy shame were less.
Ah, folk whose duty is to be devout
And let the saddle be the seat of Caesar,
If ye know well what God appoints for you,
Behold how fell this wild beast has become
For lacking the correction of the spurs,

Since you upon the bridle have laid hand!
O German Albert, who abandonest 97
Her, who has now grown savage and untamed,
And oughtest to bestride her saddle bows,
May righteous judgment, falling from the stars, 100
Come on thy blood, and be so new and plain,
That thy successor shall have fear of it;
Because ye two, thy father and thyself, 103
Have been held back by greed of yonder things
Until the empire's garden is a waste.
Come see the Montagues and Capulets, 106
The Filippeschi and Monaldi, thou
Unheeding one, those sad and these in dread.
Come, cruel one, and see affliction press 109
Thine own nobility, and cure their wrongs;
And thou shalt see how safe is Santafior.
Come see how thine own Rome is left in tears, 112
Widowed, alone, and crying day and night:
"My Caesar, why not keep me company?"
Come see the people, how they love each other; 115
And if no pity for us move thee, come
And know what is the shame of thine own fame.
If it be granted me, O Most High Jove, 118
Who once wert crucified for us on earth,
Are thy just eyes turned otherwheres away?
Or is it preparation in the abyss 121
Of thine own counsel that thou mak'st for some
Far good, completely hidden from our ken?
For all the towns of Italy are full 124
Of tyrants, and each upstart partisan,
Although a churl, is a Marcellus now.
My Florence, thou mayst well be satisfied 127
With this digression, that concerns thee not,
Thanks to thy people, reasoning so well.

Many have justice in their hearts, and shoot
But slowly, not to wield the bow unwisely;
Thy people have it ever at their lips.
Many refuse to bear the common charge;
Thy people answer in their eagerness
Without request, and cry: "We load ourselves."
Now be thou happy, for thou hast good ground,
Thou wealthy, thou at peace, thou who art wise.
If I speak truth, the facts conceal it not.
Athens and Lacedemon, that had framed
The ancient laws and were so civilized,
Gave little sign of living well, compared
With thee, who makest thy provisioning
So subtle, that to mid-November fails
To reach what thou hadst in October spun.
How often, in the time that thou recall'st,
Thy law, thy coins, titles and practices
Hast thou transformed, and made thy members new!
If thou remember well and see the light,
Thou wilt seem to thyself like some sick one,
Who on the feathers cannot come to rest,
And by her tossing seeks relief from pain.

CANTO VII

The salutations dignified and glad
Had been repeated three and four times when
Sordello, drawing back, asked: "Who are ye?"
"Before those souls had turned unto this Mount,
Who were deemed worthy to ascend to God,
My bones were buried by Octavian.
I am Virgil; and for no other sin
Did I lose Heaven, than for not having faith."

Thus answered him my Leader. As a man
Who suddenly before him sees a thing
At which he wonders, and believes and then
Believes not, with "It is," "No, it is not;"
Such he appeared, and then bent down his brow,
And, turning to him in humility,
Embraced him where the inferior lays hold.
"O glory of the Latins," said he then,
"Through whom our language showed what were its
Eternal Honor of my birth-place, thou, [powers,
What merit or what grace shows thee to me?
If I am counted fit to hear thy words,
Tell me, I pray thee, comest thou from Hell,
And from what cloister?" "I have come," said he,
"Through all the circles of the woful realm.
A power of Heaven moved me; with it I come.
Not what I did, but what I did not, made
Me lose the sight of that high Sun, whom thou
Desirest, but whom I learned late to know.
There is a place down there, not sad with pains
But only with its gloom, where the laments
Have not the sound of wailings, but of sighs.
There I abide with little innocents
Who have been bitten by the teeth of Death
Before they were exempt from human sin;
There I abide with those, who did not wear
The holy virtues three, but without vice
Have known the others and have followed them.
But if thou know'st and canst, give us some sign,
By which we may the sooner come up there
Where Purgatory has its right beginning."
He answered: "No fixed place is set for us;
I may go upward and around; as far
As I am able I will be thy guide.

But see already how the day declines,
And 'tis not possible to mount by night;
'Twere well to think of some fair resting-place.
Some souls are here upon our right, apart;
If thou permit me, I will lead thee there,
And thou shalt know them, not without delight."
"How can this be?" was answered; "he who would
Ascend by night, would he be hindered then
By others? or could not for lack of power?"
And with his finger good Sordello marked
Upon the ground, and said: "Only this line
Thou couldst not pass, when once the sun is gone;
For naught except the darkness of the night
Gives hindrance to thy going up, but that
With impotence to act hampers the will.
One may, indeed, turn downward in the night
And walk around the hillside, wandering,
While the horizon holds the day shut out."
And as if marveling, my Leader said:
"Then lead us to yon place, where thou dost say
That we may have delight in tarrying."
But little distance had we gone from there,
When I perceived the mountain hollowed out,
As here on earth the valleys hollow them.
"We will go yonder where the mountain-side
Makes of itself a bosom," said the shade,
"And there await the coming of the day."
Now steep, now level, was a winding path
Which led us to a place beside the dell,
Where dies away the border more than half.
Gold and fine silver, cochineal, pearl-white,
The clear and bright blue wood of India,
Fresh emerald at the moment when it breaks,
Beside the grass and flowers set within

That vale, would be as much excelled in hue,
As is the less excelled by what is greater.
And Nature had not only painted there,
But had the sweetness of a thousand scents
Blended in one, unknown, unseparate.
And seated on the green and on the flowers
Were souls that sang *Salve, Regina,* there,
Who for the valley were not seen without.
"Before the little sun sink to its nest,"
Began the Mantuan, who had led us thither,
"Desire me not to guide you among these;
Because ye can from this ledge better far
Make out the faces and the acts of all
Than if ye at their level were received.
He yonder, who sits highest and appears
To have neglected what he should have done,
And who moves not his mouth to the others' songs,
Was Emperor Rudolph, in whose power it was
To heal the wounds that have slain Italy,
So that her help is late at other hands.
The other, who appears to comfort him,
Ruled where the waters spring, which Moldau bears
To Elbe down, and Elbe to the sea.
His name was Ottacar; in swaddling-clothes
He was far better than his bearded son,
King Wenceslaus, who feeds on lust and sloth.
And that small-nosed man, who takes counsel there
So closely with that one of kindly look,
Died fleeing and disflowering the lily;
See how he beats his breast. Behold the other,
Who for his cheek has made of his own palm,
Sighing, a bed. Father and father-in-law
Are they of him, who is the woe of France;
They know his vicious and foul life, and thence

Has sprung the grief that so transfixes them.
He, who seems so large-limbed, whose song accords
With that of him who has the virile nose,
Was girded with the cord of every worth.
And if the youth, who there behind him sits,
Had after him remained the king, then worth
From vessel unto vessel would have passed;
Which of the other heirs can not be said.
The realms are held by James and Frederick:
But no one has the better heritage.
'Tis seldom through the branches rises up
Man's goodness; and the Giver wills it so,
That we may make our prayer for it to Him.
My words fit him, the large-nosed one, as well
As they do Peter, who is with him singing;
Wherefore Apulia and Provence now grieve.
The plant is as inferior to the seed
As, more than Beatrice and Margaret,
Constance is boasting of a husband still.
Behold the monarch of the simple life,
Henry of England, sitting there alone;
He in his branches has a better issue.
He, who is seated lowest on the ground
Among them, looking up, is Marquis William,
For whom both Alessandria and her war
Make Montferrat and Canavese weep."

CANTO VIII

It was the hour that sends the longing back
Of those upon the sea, and melts their hearts,
The day that they have bid sweet friends farewell;
That pierces the new pilgrim's heart with love,

If he but hear the far-off bell, that seems
To mourn the dying day, when I began
To render vain my hearing, and to gaze
Upon one of the souls that had arisen,
And with its hand besought that others hear.
Then, joining both its palms, it lifted them
And fixed its look toward the eastern sky,
As if it said to God : "I heed naught else."
Te lucis ante came forth from its lips
With such devotion and with such sweet notes,
As made me leave behind me my own thought;
And then the others, sweetly and devout,
Did follow on in singing all the hymn,
Having their eyes on the supernal wheels.
Here, reader, sharpen well thine eyes for truth;
Surely the veil is now so thin indeed
That it is easy to pass through within.
I saw that gentle army silently
Thereafter gazing up to heaven, as though
In some expectancy, pallid and meek;
And from the height came downward as I looked,
Two angels with two swords of flaming fire,
But shortened and deprivèd of their points.
Green as the little leaves just coming forth
Their garments were, which by their wings of green
Were smitten, flowing after them, and fanned.
Above our heads one angel stopped his flight,
The other on the other bank came down,
So that the folk was kept between them there.
Plainly could I distinguish their blond heads;
But by their faces was my vision dazzled,
As any power, confounded by excess.
"They both from Mary's bosom have come down,"
Sordello said, "as guardians of this vale

Against the serpent, that shall straightway come."
And I, who knew not by what path it came,
Turned me around, and chilly through and through,
Moved to the trusted shoulders closer still.
Again Sordello: "Let us at length go down
Among the mighty shades, and speak to them;
To see you here will give them much delight."
Only three steps, I think, I then went down,
And was below, and saw one watching me
Alone, as if to make out who I was.
The air was darkening, yet not so much
But that whate'er between his eyes and mine
It hid at first it could make clear to us.
Toward me he moved, and I too moved toward him;
My Nino, noble judge, what joy was mine
To see that thou wert not among the damned!
No salutation fair from each to each
Was silent; then he asked: "When cam'st thou first
O'er the far waters to the mountain's foot?"
"Oh," answered I, "this morning I came forth
From out the dismal places, and am still
In my first life, though I would win the other
Thus journeying." When my response was heard,
Sordello and the other one drew back,
Like folk who were bewildered suddenly.
One turned to Virgil, and the other cried
To one who sat there: "Conrad, rise and come
To see what God hath in His favor willed."
"By that especial gratitude thou owest,"
Turning to me, he said, "to Him who hides
His primal cause so that there is no ford
To reach it, when thou crossest the wide waves,
Say to my Joan, that she shall cry for me
Where answer to the innocent is made.

I do not think her mother loves me longer
Since she has changed her widow's wimples white,
Which she must long for, wretched, once again.
By her may very easily be learned
How long the fire of love in woman lasts,
If eye and touch do not oft kindle it.
The viper that is over Milan's camp
Will not make her so fair a sepulture
As would have done Gallura's cock." His face
As he was speaking bore impressed on it
The token of the zeal for righteousness,
Which glows within the heart in measure due.
My greedy eyes went up to heaven alone,
There only where the stars more slowly turn,
As nearer to its axle doth the wheel.
My Leader said: "My son, what watchest thou
Up there?" "Yonder three torches," answered I,
"Wherewith this pole of heaven is all aglow."
And then he said to me: "The four bright stars,
Which thou this morning sawest, are sunk low
On the other side, and these are where those were."
While he yet spoke, Sordello drew him toward
Himself, and said: "Behold our enemy,"
And pointed where he would that he should look.
On that side, where the little valley had
No barrier erected, was a snake,
Perchance such as gave Eve the bitter food.
The evil reptile came through grass and flowers,
And ever and anon turned back his head,
Licking, as does a beast that sleeks itself.
I noted not, and so I cannot say,
The way in which the heavenly Falcons moved,
But yet in motion saw I both of them.
For when he heard the green wings cleave the air,

The serpent fled, and the two angels wheeled
In upward equal flight back to their posts.
The shade which had drawn closer to the judge
When he had called, throughout the assault took not
His eyes one instant from beholding me.
"So may the lantern which leads thee on high
Find in thine own free-will so much of wax
As to the enameled summit is required,"
So it began, "if thou dost know true news
Of Valdimacra or the region near,
Then tell me, for I once was powerful there.
My name was Conrad Malaspina, not
The elder, but the younger, sprung from him;
For mine I had the love which here is cleansed."
"Oh," said I to him, "I have never been
Within your country's bounds; but where lives he
Throughout all Europe, who knows not of them?
The fame which is the honor of your house
Proclaims its lords, proclaims their country so,
They know it well, who yet were never there.
I swear to you, so may I go on high,
That your most honored house lays not aside
The glory of the purse nor of the sword.
Custom and Nature both so favor it,
That, though the guilty head set wrong the world,
It goes straight on, and scorns the evil way."
And he: "Go, then; for seven times the sun
Shall not return to that couch, which the Ram
With his four feet now covers and bestrides,
Before this courteous esteem of thine
Shall in the middle of thy head be nailed
With greater nails than those of others' speech,
Unless the course of judgment shall be stayed."

CANTO IX

THE concubine of old Tithonus now
Forth from her sweet friend's arms, was growing white
Upon her balcony in the eastern sky;
Her forehead all resplendent was with gems,
Set in the shape of that cold animal,
Who with his tail inflicts his blows on men;
And, of the steps with which she climbs, the Night
Had taken two in that place where we were,
And now the third was bending low its wings,
When I, who had with me somewhat of Adam,
O'ercome by sleep, reclined upon the grass,
Where we already had our seats, all five.
It was the hour before the dawn, when first
The swallow sings her melancholy lays,
Perchance in memory of former woes,
And when our mind is more a wanderer
From flesh, and less held captive to our thought,
And in its visions is almost divine;
In dream I seemed to see an eagle poised
In heaven, golden-feathered, and with wings
Outspread, and all intent on swooping down.
It seemed to me that I was at that place
Where Ganymede's folk were left behind,
When to the highest conclave he was rapt.
And in myself I thought: Perhaps it strikes
Here only through its custom, and disdains
Elsewhere to bear aught upward in its claws.
And then it seemed, that having wheeled a little,
It came down, terrible as thunderbolt,
And snatched me up, as far as to the fire;
And there it seemed that it and I both burned,

And so the imagined conflagration scorched
That I perforce was wakened from my sleep.
Not otherwise Achilles shook himself,
Turning his eyes about him as he woke,
Not knowing where he was, when he was stolen
From Chiron by his mother, and was borne
Still sleeping in her arms across to Scyros,
Whence afterwards the Greeks made him depart;
Than I was startled now, when from my face
Sleep took its flight, and I grew deathly pale,
Like one in terror, who turns icy cold.
My Comforter was at my side alone,
The sun already more than two hours high;
And I was with my face turned toward the sea.
"Be not afraid," my Lord said, "be assured
That we have to a point of vantage come;
Restrain not, rather put forth all thy strength;
For thou art now to Purgatory come;
See there the ledge that closes it around;
Where it seems parted is the way within.
But now when in the white dawn ere the day
Thy soul within thee slept upon the flowers,
With which the place below is beautiful,
A Lady came, and said, 'I am Lucia;
Permit that I take him who is asleep,
And I will thus assist him on his way.'
Sordello and the other noble forms
Remained; she took thee, and as day grew bright
Went upward, and I followed in her track.
She placed thee here; and when her fair eyes first
Had showed me yonder entrance in the rocks,
Both she and sleep together went away."
As one who in his doubt is reassured,
And changes into comfort what was fear

After the truth has been revealed to him,
I changed; and as my Leader saw that now
I was without a care, up by the cliff
He moved, and I behind him toward the height.
Reader, thou seest well how I exalt
My matter, and, if therefore with more art
I am sustaining it, pray, marvel not.
We had drawn nigh, and were at such a place,
That, where first seemed to me to be a break,
Or a mere fissure that divides a wall,
I saw a gate, and, lower down, three steps,
By which to come to it, of divers colors;
And too, a porter, who as yet spoke not.
And as I opened wider still my eye,
I saw him seated on the topmost step,
Such in his face, that I endured it not.
And in his hand he had a naked sword,
That so cast on us its reflected rays,
That I would often lift my eyes in vain.
"Speak where ye are, what is it ye desire?"
Thus he began to say; "where is the guide?
Beware lest coming upward work you harm."
"A Lady, come from heaven, aware of this,"
My Master made reply to him, "but now
Has told us, 'Yonder go, there is the gate.'"
"May she advance your steps in good still more,"
Began the courteous guardian of the gate;
"Do ye come forward then unto our stairs."
When to the first great stair we had come up,
Its marble was so polished, white and smooth,
That I was mirrored in it as I am;
The next of darker hue than purple-black,
Was of a rough stone, as if seared with fire,
And cracked throughout its length and all across;

The third, which uppermost amassed itself,
  Seemed to me porphyry, as flaming bright
  As is the blood which spurts forth from a vein.
On this God's Angel had placed both his feet,
  While seated on the threshold of the gate,
  Which seemed to me a rock of adamant.
My Leader drew me of my own good will
  Up over the three steps, and said to me:
  "Humbly beseech that he undo the lock."
Devoutly prostrate at the holy feet,
  I craved the mercy of his opening;
  But first I smote three times upon my breast.
Then seven P's upon my brow he wrote
  With his sword's point, and said: "When thou
  Hast come within, see that thou bathe these wounds."
Ashes, or earth, that has been dug out dry,
  Would be of one shade with the garb he wore,
  And from beneath that he drew forth two keys.
One was of gold, of silver was the other;
  First with the white, and with the yellow next
  He so did to the gate that I was glad.
"Whenever one of these two keys so fails,
  That it turns not aright within the lock,"
  Said he to us, "this narrow way bides closed.
One is more precious, but the other calls
  For much of art and wit ere it unlocks,
  Because it is the one to loose the knot.
From Peter's hand I have them, and he said
  'Twere better fault to open than keep locked,
  If people cast themselves before my feet."
Then of the sacred portal he pushed in
  The door, and said: "Go in, but learn of me,
  That he who looks behind returns outside."
And when the pivots of that sacred door,

Which are of metal, resonant and strong,
Within their hinges turned, Tarpeia gave
Not forth such roaring nor appeared so harsh,
When good Metellus was led out from her,
And she for that remained thereafter poor.
Then I, attentive to the first tone, turned
And *Te Deum laudamus* seemed to hear,
As 'twere a voice commingled with sweet sound.
The same impression was made on me then
By what I heard, as we are wont to have
When one is singing with the instruments;
For now the words are heard, and now are not.

CANTO X

We were within the threshold of the gate,
Which evil love in souls unlearns to use,
Because it makes the crooked way seem straight,
When I by sound perceived it to be closed;
If I had turned my eyes to look at it,
What fit excuse had there been for the fault?
We were then climbing through a rocky cleft,
Which moved to one and then the other side
Like waters that recede and then draw near.
"Here there is need to use a little art,"
Began my Leader, "as we closer draw,
Now here, now there, to that side which recedes."
And this had caused our steps to be so scant,
That ere we had gone through this needle's eye
Already had the moon's decreasing disk
Regained its bed, and sunk again to rest.
But when we were in free and open space,
Up where the mountain backward draws together,

I, wearied, and we both unsure, which way
Was ours, we stopped upon a level place,
More lonely than the roads through desert lands;
And from its edge, the limit of the void,
To where from base the high bank rises sheer,
A human body in three times would measure;
And there, far as my eye in flight could reach,
Now on the left side and now on the right,
This cornice seemed to me to be the same.
Our feet had not yet moved thereon, before
I had perceived the bank,—which swept around
And, being upright, gave no path to mount,—
To be of marble, white and so adorned
With sculptures, that not Polycletus' self
But Nature even were there put to shame.
The Angel, who came down with that decree
Of peace on earth, wept-for so many years,
Which opened Heaven from its long interdict,
Appeared before us there so truly carved
And in such attitude of gentleness,
That he seemed not an image that is dumb;
One would take oath that he was saying *Ave;*
Because she too was imaged there, who turned
The key to open the exalted love;
And in her mien she had impressed these words,
Ecce ancilla Dei in very form,
As is a figure, that is stamped in wax.
"Fix not thy mind upon one place alone,"
The gentle Master said, who had me then
Upon that side where people have their hearts;
Wherefore I turned away my eyes, and saw,
Beyond where Mary was, and at that side,
Where he was standing who was urging me,
Another story put upon the rock.

Wherefore I passed by Virgil, and drew near,
So that it might be set before my eyes.
Carved in the very marble was the cart
On which the oxen drew the sacred ark,
That makes men fear an office not assigned.
People appeared in front; and all of them
In seven bands divided, made one sense
Say, "No," the other, "Yes, they really sing."
Likewise about the smoke of incense clouds
That had been imaged there, the eyes and nose
Became discordant with their Yes and No.
And there before the blessed vessel, went
The lowly Psalmist, dancing, with loins girt,
Both more and less than King in such a state.
At a great palace window opposite
Was Michal's figure carved, thence looking down,
A lady of a sad and scornful mien.
I moved my feet from that place where I stood
To look more clearly at another story,
Which, further on than Michal, gleamed all white.
The exalted glory of the Roman prince,
Whose worth it was incited Gregory
To his great victory, was storied here;
I speak of Emperor Trajan, near whom stood
A widow at the bridle of his steed,
In attitude of weeping and of grief.
Around him seemed to be a trampling throng
Of horsemen, and the eagles in the gold
Above his head moved plainly in the wind.
The wretched woman stood among them all,
And seemed to say: "My Lord, do vengeance now
For me for my son's death, that breaks my heart."
And he made answer to her: "Only wait
Until I have returned." And she, like one

In whom distress is urgent, said: "My Lord,
If thou do not return?" And he: "The one
Who has my place shall do it." "What shall be
To thee his good, if thou forget thine own?"
Then he: "Now comfort thee, for I must needs
Fulfil my duty ere I move from here;
For justice wills it; pity holds me back."
The One, who never sees a thing unknown,
Produced that speaking for the eyes to see,
Novel to us, because not found on earth.
While I was there rejoicing to behold
The images of such humilities,
And, for their Maker's sake, so dear to see,
The Poet murmured: "See, here at this side
Are many people, but they take few steps;
These will direct us to the lofty stairs."
My eyes, that were on gazing so intent,
Were swift to turn about toward him to see
Whatever new was there, as they are fain.
I would not, reader, that thou be dismayed
From any purposed good, because thou hearest
How God wills that indebtedness be paid.
Give no attention to the form of pain;
Think of what follows; think, that at the worst,
Beyond the Judgment-Day it cannot go.
"Master," began I, "that which yonder seems
To come toward us, appears not to be men,—
I know not what, my sight is so confused."
"Their burdened state of torment," answered he,
"Is bending them so downward to the earth,
My eyes at first had need to struggle too.
But look there fixedly, and by the sight
Distinguish what comes on beneath those rocks.
Thou canst now see how each one beats his breast."

O ye proud Christians, wretched, weary souls, 121
Who, sick in vision of the mind, have trust
In backward steps, do ye not understand,
That we are worms that have been born to form 124
The angelic butterfly, which wings its way
Upward to judgment, lacking all defence?
Why do your minds lift up themselves on high, 127
When ye are but defective insects still,
Even as worms in which formation fails?
As to support a ceiling or a roof 130
Sometimes a figure corbel-wise is seen
To bring his knees up to his breast, and cause
By unreality a real distress 133
In him who sees it; even such I saw
These were, when I had given heed to them.
True it is, these were more or less bowed down, 136
As they had more or less upon their backs;
And he, who had most patience in his mien,
Weeping, appeared to say: "I can no more." 139

CANTO XI

"O Thou our Father, who art in the heavens,
Not circumscribed, but for the greater love
Thou bearest to the first effects on high,
Praise to Thy Name and to Thy Power be 4
From every creature, as it is most meet
To render thanks for thy sweet effluence.
The peace of thine own Kingdom come to us, 7
For we cannot attain to it ourselves
With all our mind, if it come not to us.
As of their will Thine angels make to Thee 10
Their sacrifice, as they Hosanna sing,
So may all men make sacrifice of theirs.

Our daily Manna give to us this day, 13
Without which through this rough and desert land
He backward goes, who toils most to go on:
And as we have forgiven every one 16
The ill that we have borne, do Thou forgive
In mercy, and regard not our desert.
Our virtue, which is easily subdued, 19
Let not the ancient adversary tempt,
But from him who attacks, deliver us.
This latest prayer, dear Lord, is uttered now 22
Not for ourselves, because there is no need,
But for their sake, who have remained behind."
Thus praying for themselves and us good speed, 25
These shades kept on their way, under a load
Like that of which we sometimes dream in sleep,
Unequally distressed, all circling round 28
Along this lowest cornice wearily,
Purging away the cloudiness of earth.
If prayer for us is always rising there, 31
What can be here both done and said for them
By those, whose wills are rooted in the good?
Surely men ought to help them wash away 34
The marks that they bore hence, that they may rise,
Made clean and light, up to the wheeling stars.
"Pray, so may justice and compassion soon 37
Unburden you and let you move the wing,
That shall uplift you as ye do desire,
Show us upon which hand the shortest path 40
Leads to the stairway, and if more than one,
Teach us the one that slopes least steep of all;
As this one who is with me, for the weight 43
Of Adam's flesh, with which he still is clad,
Is slow in mounting up, against his will."
Their words, which had been uttered answering those, 46

Which he whom I was following had said,
It was not manifest from whom they came;
But it was said: "Come ye toward the right
Along the bank with us, and ye shall find
The pass a living person may ascend.
And if I were not hindered by the stone,
Which is subduing now my haughty neck,
So that I needs must carry my face low,
At this one I would look, who still alive
Names not himself, to see if I may know him,
And for this burden make him pitiful.
I was a Latin, a great Tuscan's son;
Guglielmo Aldobrandesco was my father.
I know not if his name was ever with you.
Because of ancient blood and gallant deeds,
My ancestors made me so arrogant,
That of our common mother I thought not,
And went so far in scorn of every man,
I died for it, the Sienese know well,
And every child in Campagnatico.
I am Omberto; not to me alone
Has pride done harm, but all my fellows too
It swept on to disaster with itself;
And therefore here, till God be satisfied,
I must needs bear this weight among the dead,
Because among the living I would not."
As I was listening, I held down my face;
And one of them, not he who spoke to me,
Twisted himself beneath his crushing load,
And saw and knew me and was crying out,
Holding his eyes with difficulty fixed
Upon me, as all bent I walked by them.
"Art not thou Oderisi," answered I,
"Honor of Gubbio, and of that art,

Which is in Paris called illuminating?"
"Brother," said he, "more smiling are the leaves
Of Franco of Bologna's penciling;
The honor is all his, and mine in part.
Truly so courteous I had not been
While I was living, for my great desire
Of excellence, on which my heart was set.
'Tis here is paid the fee of such a pride;
And I were not yet here, if it were not,
That, still with power to sin, I turned to God.
Oh, the vainglory of the powers of man!
How short the time the green upon its top
Endures, if ruder ages follow not!
In painting Cimabue thought to hold
The field, and now hath Giotto all the cry,
So that the other's fame is grown obscure.
So hath one Guido from the other taken
The glory of our tongue, and one is born,
Who shall, perchance, drive both from out the nest.
For earthly fame is but a breath of wind,
That now from this side comes, and now from that,
And with each changing quarter changes name.
What greater fame is thine, if thou unflesh
Thee in old age, than if thou were to die
Ere thou wert done with rattle and with pap,
Before a thousand years, a time beside
Eternity more brief, than is a twinkling
To heaven's circle that is slowest turned?
The fame of him, who makes so little way
In front of me, rang through all Tuscany,
And scarcely in Siena now is whispered,
Where he was lord, when they destroyed the rage
Of Florence, who was haughty at that time,
Even as now she has grown basely vile.

Your fame is as the color of the grass,
  Which comes and goes, and he discolors it,
  By whom its tender green sprang from the earth."
And I to him: "Thy true words teach my heart
  A humble goodness, and bring low my pride;
  But who is he of whom thou now wert speaking?"
"That," answered he, "is Provenzan Salvani;
  And he is here, because he had presumed
  To get Siena wholly in his hands.
Thus he has gone, and goes, without repose
  E'er since he died; who dares too much on earth
  Must pay such coin in satisfaction here."
And I: "If now that spirit which awaits,
  Ere it repent, the very brink of life,
  Remains below and may not mount up here,
If good prayer come not to its aid, until
  As long a time has passed as was its life,
  How was the coming up vouchsafed to him?"
"When his life was most glorious," said he,
  "Freely within the Campo of Siena
  He took his stand, all shame then laid aside,
And there, that he might free his friend from pains
  That he endured as prisoner of Charles,
  He brought himself to tremble in each vein.
I say no more; I know that I speak darkly,
  But yet ere long thy neighbors will so act,
  Thou shalt be able to interpret it.
That deed it was removed for him those bounds."

CANTO XII

With equal pace, like oxen 'neath the yoke,
  We went along, I and that burdened soul,
  As long as the sweet Teacher suffered it.

But when he said: "Leave him, press on, for here
'Tis well that with the sails and oars each one
As best he may should forward urge his bark,"
Erect, as walking makes it needful, I
Raised up my body, though my thoughts remained
As they had been, both stooping and abased.
I had moved onward, and was following
My Master's footsteps gladly, and we both
Were manifesting now how light we were,
When thus he bade me: "Downward turn thine eyes;
It will be well for thee, to ease thy way,
That thou behold the bed beneath thy feet."
That there may be some memory of them,
Above the buried dead their level tombs
Have, figured, what aforetime they have been;
Whence many times for them will tears be shed,
Because of pricking of remembrance there,
That only to the pious gives the spur,
So in that place I saw all figured o'er,—
But in the work, of better likeness far,—
As much of road as jutted from the Mount.
I saw that one, in his creation nobler
Than any other creature, down from heaven
Descend like thunderbolt, there at one side.
I saw Briareus, on the other side,
Transfixed by the celestial bolt, lie there
Heavy upon the earth, in mortal chill.
I saw Thymbraeus, I saw Pallas, Mars,
Still in their armor at their father's side,
Looking upon the giants' scattered limbs.
I saw, too, Nimrod stand beside the foot
Of his great labor, as though dazed, and watch
Tribes that in Shinar had been proud with him.
O Niobe, with what lamenting eyes

I saw thee, sculptured there upon the road,
And on each hand were seven children slain!
O Saul, how on thine own sword didst thou there
Appear in death upon Gilboa's height,
Which knew thereafter neither rain nor dew!
O mad Arachne, so I saw thee sad,
Half spider now, over the shreds of what
Thy hands had wrought to thine own injury!
O Rehoboam, here thine image seems
No more to threaten, but with terror filled
A chariot bears it off ere men pursue!
Portrayed in the hard pavement also was
How costly to his mother Alcmaeon made
The unpropitious ornament appear;
Portrayed how his own sons did cast themselves
Within the Temple on Sennacherib,
And how, when he was dead, they left him there;
Portrayed the ruin and cruel butchery
Tamyris wrought, when she to Cyrus said:
"Blood hast thou thirsted for, with blood I fill thee;"
Portrayed how the Assyrians in rout
Fled, after Holofernes had been slain,
And, too, the relics of the slaughtered one.
I saw there Troy in ashes and in caverns;
O Ilion, how low and vile wert thou
Portrayed by the image that is there discerned!
What master ever was of brush or stylus,
Who could set forth the shadows and the lines,
That there would make each subtle wit admire?
Dead seemed the dead, the living seemed alive;
Who saw the real saw no more than I
In what I trod on, as I went, bowed down.
Then be ye proud, and go with haughty look,
Children of Eve, and bend not down your face,

So that ye may behold your evil way.
More of the Mountain we have gone around,
And of the sun's course much more had been spent,
Than had been noted by the mind not free,
When he, who ever forward with his mind
Attentive went, began: "Lift up thy head;
'Tis time no more to go in such suspense.
See, yonder is an angel, who prepares
To come toward us; see, now from work returns
The sixth of the handmaidens of the day;
With reverence adorn thine acts and face,
That it may please him to send us on high;
Think that this day shall never dawn again."
His admonition that no time be lost
Was so familiar to me, that thereof
He could not speak to me obscurely now.
To us came on the Creature Beautiful,
Enrobed in white, and with a countenance
Like a star trembling in the morning sky.
With arms outspread, and then with outspread wings
He said to us: "Come; here the steps are, near,
And easily henceforth does one ascend."
How few are they that to this bidding come!
O human kind, born to fly upward, why
At such a little wind do ye so fall?
He led us on to where the rock was cut,
And there across my forehead struck his wings;
Then promised me my journey should be safe.
As on the right, to scale the hill whereon
Above the Rubaconte stands the church,
That dominates the City guided well,
The excessive steepness of the rise is broken
By steps, that had been placed there in the days
When records and when measures still were safe:

So here was rendered easier the bank,
That falls off sharply from the round above;
Though here and there the high rock grazes one.
And as we turned our persons to go there,
Beati pauperes spiritu was sung
By voices in such wise no speech could tell.
How different these passes are from those
In hell, for here we enter in with song,
But there below with lamentations fierce!
We now were mounting by the sacred stairs,
And I appeared far lighter to myself
Than on the plain I had appeared before.
Wherefore I said: "Master, what heavy thing
Is lifted from me, so that, as it were,
I feel no weariness as I go on?"
He answered: "When the P's, that have remained
Upon thy face and are almost extinct,
Shall, like the one, be utterly removed,
Thy feet will be so conquered by good will,
They will not only feel no weariness,
But their delight will be to be urged on."
And then I did, as those will do, who go
With something on their head to them unknown,
Except another's signs make them suspect;
So that the hand lends aid to ascertain,
And searches and finds out, that service doing
That cannot then be rendered by the sight:
And with the fingers of my right hand spread
I found the letters only six, which he
Who bore the keys had cut above my temples;
And, seeing what I did, my Leader smiled.

CANTO XIII

We now were at the topmost of the stairs,
Where was cut back a second time the Mount,
Which frees from evil those ascending it.
There too a cornice binds the hill about,
In manner as the lower one had done,
Excepting that its arc more quickly curves.
No shade is there, nor figure that appears,
So bare the bank appears, so bare the way,
With but the livid color of the stone.
"If we await those here whom we may ask,"
The Poet said, "I fear perchance our choice
Will have too much delay;" and thereupon
Fixed on the sun his eyes with steady gaze;
And for his motion made of his right side
A centre, and thus turned his left about.
"O thou sweet Light, I enter, trusting thee,
On this new way; be thou our guide," said he,
"As it is needful here that we be led:
Thou givest earth its heat, thou art its light;
If other reason to the contrary
Urge not, thy rays ought ever to be guides."
As far as here is reckoned for a mile,
So far had we already gone from there
In little time because of ready will;
And toward us in their flight were heard to come
But yet not seen by us, spirits that gave
Their courteous invitations to Love's board.
The first voice that was passing by in flight
"Vinum non habent" loudly said, and then
Behind us went along, repeating it.
And ere it utterly from hearing passed

As it withdrew, "I am Orestes," cried
Another passing, that too halted not.
"Father, what voices," then I asked, "are these?"
And as I spoke, behold, the third one said:
"Love them who have done evil unto you."
And the good Master said: "This circle whips
The sin of envy, and on that account
The lashes of the scourge are drawn from love.
The curb must be of a contrasting sound;
And to my mind, I think that thou wilt hear
It ere thou reach the Pass of Pardoning.
But fix thine eyes intently through the air,
And thou shalt see a people seated there
In front of us, each one beside the cliff."
And then I opened wider still my eyes;
I looked ahead, and saw there shades with cloaks
Not different in color from the stone.
And when we were a little further on,
I heard a cry: "O Mary, pray for us!"
And cries to Michael, Peter and all Saints.
I do not think there goes on earth today
A man so hard, compassion would not pierce
At sight of that which later I beheld;
For when I had approached so near to them,
That what they did grew clear to me, the tears
Flowed from my eyes for the great grief I felt.
Coarse haircloth covered them, it seemed to me,
And each one with his shoulder did support
His neighbor, and the bank supported all.
Thus do the blind, who lack the earthly goods,
Stand at the Pardons, begging what they need,
And one upon the other drops his head,
So that men's pity may be quickly spurred,
Not only by the sound of what is said,

But by the sight, which makes no less a plea.
As to the blind the sunlight profits not,
So to these shades, where I was speaking then,
The light of heaven was not bountiful;
For all their eyelids were pierced through with wire
Of iron, and so stitched, as men treat hawks,
Because for wildness they abide not still.
It seemed to me I did them outrage thus
Going my way seeing, not being seen;
Wherefore to my wise Counselor I turned.
He well knew what the dumb one fain would say,
And so he waited not till I had asked,
But said: "Speak, and be brief and to the point."
Virgil was coming with me on that side,
Where from the cornice it is possible
To fall, because no rim encircles it;
And on my other hand the pious shades
Were there, and through the suture horrible
Pressed out the tears, that, falling, bathed their cheeks.
I turned me to them, and: "O folk assured,"
Thus I began, "of seeing light above,
Which your desire alone has in its care;
So may grace quickly clear away the scum
From off your consciences, so that the stream
Of memory may through them flow down clear,
Tell me,—'twere gracious and dear to me,—
If here among you be a Latin soul;
Perchance 'twere good for it, if I knew that."
"O brother, each one is a citizen
Of a true city; but thou meanest one,
Who passed his pilgrimage in Italy."
These words as a reply I seemed to hear
A little further on than where I stood;
Wherefore I made myself heard still more there.

Among the others was a shade that seemed
Expectant; and if one would ask: "How so?"
It was that he like a blind man raised his chin.
"Spirit," said I, "who conquerest thyself
To mount, if it was thou that answeredst me,
Make thyself known to me by place or name."
"I was a Sienese, and with the rest
Cleanse here my guilty life, and beg with tears
Of Him, that He vouchsafe Himself to us.
Sapient I was not, though Sapia called,
And at another's hurt I was by far
More glad than at good fortune of my own.
That thou mayst know that I deceive thee not,
Hear if I was not mad, as I have said,
My arch of years already sweeping down.
Not far from Colle were my townsmen joined
In battle with the enemy, and I
Had prayed to God for that which He had willed.
They were defeated there, and turned to flight
In bitter straits; and when I saw the chase,
I felt a joy unlike all other joys;
So that I upward turned my daring face,
And cried to God: 'I fear Thee now no more,'
As does the blackbird, if the sky but clear.
I wished for peace with God toward the end
Of life; and even yet by penitence
My debt had not been lessened, were it not
That one had held me in his memory,
Pier Pettignano, in his holy prayers,
Who in his charity was grieved for me.
But who art thou, that seekest here to know
Of our conditions, and hast eyes still free,
As I believe, and breathing still, dost speak?"
"My eyes," said I, "shall yet from me be taken;

Though for but little time, as my offence
In turning them with envy, is but slight.
The fear is greater far, at which my soul
Is in suspense, of pains below, for I
Already with that burden am weighed down."
And she to me: "Who then has guided thee
Up here to us, if thou thinkst to return?"
And I: "He who is with me, and speaks not;
And I am living; therefore ask of me,
Spirit elect, if thou wilt that I yet
Should move my mortal feet for thee on earth."
"Oh, this is such a novel thing to hear,"
Said she; "it is a great mark of God's love;
Therefore assist me sometimes with thy prayer.
And I beseech by what thou most desirest,
If e'er thou tread the land of Tuscany,
That thou restore my fame among my kin.
For thou shalt find them there with that vain folk
That hope in Talamone, and shall lose
More hope there still, than seeking the Diana:
But even more the admirals will lose there."

CANTO XIV

"Who is this one that, circling thus our Mount
Ere death have given him the power of flight,
Opens and shuts his eyes at his own will?"
"I know not, but I know he is not alone;
Do thou, who art the nearer to him, ask,
And greet him gently, so that he may speak."
Two spirits, who against each other leaned,
Were thus discoursing of me at my right;
Then turned their faces up, to speak to me;

And one of them: "O soul, that still confined
Within the body, journeyest toward heaven,
For charity console us now, and say
Whence thou hast come and who thou art; for thou
Dost make us marvel so at this thy grace,
As that must do which never yet has been."
Then said I: "Through mid Tuscany there flows
A stream, which risen on Falterona's height
Finds not enough the hundred miles it courses.
I bring this body from above its banks;
To tell you who I am would be vain speech,
Because my name sounds not yet far abroad."
"If with my intellect I penetrate
Thy meaning clearly," then replied to me
He who spoke first, "thou speakest of the Arno."
Then said the other to him: "Why did he
Conceal that river's name, as does a man
That of things horrible?" Whereon the shade
Of whom the question had been asked, made thus
His answer to it: "I know not, but meet
Were it the name of such a valley perished;
For from its source, where the rough mountain chain,
From which Pelorus is cut off, so teems,
That in few places it exceeds that mark,
Unto the place to which it goes to give
That back, which heaven sucks up from the sea,
Whence all the rivers take what flows in them,
Virtue is driven forth by all, as though
An enemy, a serpent,—be its cause
The ill-starred region, or ill habit's spur;—
Wherefore the dwellers in that wretched vale
Have so transformed their nature, that it seems
As if they were in Circe's pasturing.
Among foul hogs, more fit for acorns than

For other food, that hath been made for use
Of men, it first directs its scanty course.
Curs it finds next, as it comes flowing down,
More snarling than their power is calling for,
And twists its muzzle from them in disdain.
It goes on falling, and the more it swells,
The more it finds the dogs becoming wolves,
The accursed and ill-fated ditch it is.
Then through more hollow gorges still it falls
And finds the foxes, which so full of fraud
Fear not that wit should set its traps for them.
I will not cease, because another hears;
It will be well for him, if he recall
What a true spirit now makes clear to me.
For I behold thy grandson, who, become
A hunter of those wolves upon the bank
Of that proud river, terrifies them all.
He sells their flesh, while they are yet alive;
Later, as worn-out cattle, slaughters them;
Many he robs of life, himself of fame.
He comes forth bloody from the gloomy woods,
Leaving them so, that in a thousand years
They do not grow again to their first state."
As at the announcement of distressful harm
The face of him who listens is disturbed,
From whatsoever side the peril strikes;
So saw I how the other soul, that turned
To listen, now became disturbed and sad
When it had taken to its mind these words.
What one had said and then the other's look
Made me desire to know what were their names,
And so I made request of them with prayers.
Whereon the spirit, which first spoke with me,
Began anew: "Thou bidst me condescend

To do for thee what thou deniest me;
But since God wills that in thee should shine out
Such grace, I will not treat thee scantily;
Then know Guido del Duca is my name.
My blood was so with envy all on fire,
If I had seen a man becoming glad,
Thou wouldst have seen my face one livid hue.
Of that my sowing now I reap such straw.
O human race, why settest thou the heart
On aught where fellowship must be renounced?
This is Renier, of the house of Calboli
The glory and the honor, of whose worth
No one has risen since to be the heir.
Not his blood only is despoiled, between
The Po, the mountains, Reno and the sea,
Of good that truth and happiness require;
For it is full within those boundaries
Of poisonous stocks, so that but slowly now
Could they by cultivation be made less.
Where is good Lizio, Arrigo Mainardi,
Pier Traversaro, Guido di Carpigna?
Men of Romagna, turned to bastards, when
Will a new Fabbro in Bologna rise?
A Bernardin di Fosco in Faenza,
The noble scion of a little plant?
Marvel not, Tuscan, if I weep, when I
Recall the time Guido da Prato lived
Among us; Ugolino d' Azzo, too,
Federico Tignoso and his friends,
The Traversari, and the Anastagi
(And both the houses now without an heir),
The ladies and the knights, the toils and ease
Which love and courtesy inspired in us,
There where the hearts have grown so wicked now.

O Brettinoro, why dost thou not flee,
  Since they have gone, that were thy family,
  And many people, not to share the guilt?
Bagnacaval does well to get no sons,
  But Castrocaro ill, and Conio worse
  To trouble longer to beget such Counts.
And the Pagani will do well, when once
  The Demon leaves them; but not even so
  That a pure witness shall remain of them.
O Ugolin de' Faltolin, secure
  Is thy good name, for men expect no more
  One who, degenerate, can blacken it.
But now go, Tuscan, on thy way, because
  Weeping is dearer to me far than speech,
  So much has our discourse distressed my mind."
We were aware that these dear souls perceived
  When we went on; so of the way we took
  Their very silence made us confident.
And when proceeding we became alone,
  A voice that seemed a thunderbolt that cleaves
  The air, came on toward us, uttering:
"Whoever findeth me, shall slay me;" then
  It fled as when the thunder dies away,
  If suddenly it rends the cloud apart.
And when from this our hearing had a truce,
  Behold, the other, with so loud a crash,
  It seemed like thunder quickly following:
"I am Aglauros, who became a stone;"
  And to press closer to the Poet's side,
  Backward I stepped, and no more forward then.
With the air silent now on every side,
  He said to me: "That was the bit so hard,
  That ought to keep a man within his bounds;
But ye will take the bait, so that the hook

Of the old adversary draws you on,
And so the bridle and recall count little.
The heavens call you and around you turn,
Showing eternal beauties to your eyes,
And yet they gaze but downward to the earth;
Wherefore He scourges you, who sees all things."

CANTO XV

As much as shows, between the day's third hour
And its beginning, of the heavenly sphere
That ever like a child disports itself,
So much now seemed toward the evening
To be still left the sun for his full course;
There it was vesper-time, but midnight here.
The rays were striking us full in the face,
Because the Mountain had been circled so,
That we were going now straight to the west,
When I perceived my brow was weighted down
With splendor far more than it was before;
A wonder to me were the things unknown.
Wherefore I raised both hands above my brows,
And made me a protection from the sun,
Thus to diminish the excess of light.
As when from water or a mirror leaps
A ray in the direction opposite,
In manner like to that in which it fell
Rebounding upward, and departs as far,
At equal distance from the plummet line,
As both experience and science show;
E'en so it seemed to me that I was now,
By light reflected there in front of me,
So smitten that my sight was swift to flee.

"Sweet Father, what is this," said I, "from which
I can not screen my sight so that it may
Avail me, and which seems to move toward us?"
"Be not amazed," he answered me, "if still
The family of heaven dazzle thee;
It is an angel, come to bid us mount.
Soon it will be, when to behold these things
Will not be grievous to thee, but a joy,
As great as in thy nature thou canst feel."
When we came where the blessed Angel was,
With joyful voice he said: "Enter ye here
A stairway than the others far less steep."
Already we were mounting, starting thence,
With *"Beati misericordes"* sung
Behind us, and *"Rejoice, O conqueror!"*
We two alone, my Master and myself,
Were going upward, and thus journeying
I thought to gain advantage from his words,
And so addressed him with my questioning:
"What did the spirit from Romagna mean,
When speaking of 'renouncing fellowship'?"
Wherefore he said: "Of his own greatest fault
He knows the harm, and so let none think strange
That he reprove it, so men mourn it less.
Because your longings are directed there
Where by companionship each part is less,
Envy inflates the bellows for your sighs.
But if the love of that sphere which is highest
Drew upward your desire, there would not be
That fear within your breast; because the more
They are in number, who up there say 'ours,'
So much the more of good doth each possess,
The more that cloister's burning charity."
"I am more empty of content," said I,

"Than if I had kept silence at the first,
And still more doubt I gather in my mind.
How can it be, that good which has been shared,
Should make the more possessors richer still,
Than if it were possessed by but a few?"
And he to me: "Because thou fastenest
Thy mind upon the things of earth alone,
Thou gatherest darkness from the light itself.
That Good, unbounded and ineffable,
Which is above, so runs forth to meet love,
As to a lucid body comes a ray.
As much of ardor as it finds, so much
It gives itself; so that how far soe'er
Love spreads, eternal worth beyond it grows;
The more they are who set their hearts on high,
The more they love well and the more the love;
And like a mirror each gives back to each.
And if my words leave hunger unappeased,
Thou shalt see Beatrice, and she will then
Completely satisfy thine every wish.
But do thou strive that soon may be erased,
As are the two already, the five wounds,
Which close in healing by the pain they feel."
I fain had said: "Thou satisfiest me,"
When I observed the next round had been reached,
So that my eager eyes silenced my words.
There seemed I of a sudden to myself
In an ecstatic vision to be rapt,
And in a temple to behold a throng;
A lady was about to go within,
And said in a sweet mother's way: "My son,
Wherefore hast thou in this wise dealt with us?
Behold, thy father and I sorrowing
Have searched for thee;" and as she ceased to speak,

That which at first appeared, had disappeared.
And then there came another, on whose cheeks
Those drops were flowing down, which grief distils
When anger at another has sprung up;
And she said: "If thou art this city's lord,
The name of which so set the gods in strife,
And whence all science sparkles forth, then take,
Pisistratus, thy vengeance of those arms
That dared embrace our daughter." And the lord
With look of moderation seemed benign
And mild, as in these words he answered her:
"What shall we do to him who is ill-willed,
If he who loves us is condemned by us?"
Then I saw people all on fire with rage
As they with stones were murdering a youth,
And shouted to each other loud: "Kill, kill;"
And by that death already weighted down,
I saw him bow himself toward the earth,
But of his eyes still making gates to heaven;
And in such struggle prayed the Lord on high,
With look that unlocks pity in the heart,
That He forgive his persecutors' sin.
When outwardly my spirit had returned
To those things which are true outside of it,
I recognized my wanderings not false.
My Leader, who could see me acting then
Like one who frees himself from slumber, said:
"What ails thee? Thou canst not support thyself,
But hast been walking more than half a league,
Veiling thine eyes and with thy legs not free,
Like one whom wine or sleep is bending down."
"O my sweet Father," said I, "if thou wilt
But listen, I will tell thee what appeared
When still my legs were taken from me so."

And he: "If thou didst have a hundred masks
  Before thy face, the workings of thy mind,
  However slight, were not concealed from me.
Thy visions came that thou have no excuse
  To close thy heart to waters of that peace,
  Which from the eternal Fountain are poured forth.
I did not ask: 'What ails thee?' as does one
  Who looks alone with that eye which sees not,
  When all inanimate the body lies;
I asked that I might give strength to thy feet;
  So must the sluggish be spurred on, when slow
  To use their wakefulness at its return."
As we were walking through the vesper-time,
  Looking ahead, as far as sight could reach
  Against the late and shining rays, behold,
Little by little there came on a smoke
  In our direction, and as dark as night,
  Nor was there any place to go from it;
This took from us our eyes and the pure air.

CANTO XVI

Darkness of hell, and of a night deprived
  Of every planet, 'neath a little sky,
  As much as can be, darkened with the clouds,
Made not a veil so dense before my sight,
  As did the smoke that was now covering us,
  Nor was of such harsh texture to my sense;
For it allowed not that my eyes be open;
  Therefore my wise and trusty Escort drew
  Close to my side, his shoulder proffering.
And as a blind man walks behind his guide,
  In order not to stray, or butt against

What might bring harm to him, or death perchance;
I went along through air bitter and foul,
And listened to my Leader, who ceased not
To say: "Take care; be not cut off from me."
I could hear voices, and each one appeared
To be a prayer for peace and mercy to
The Lamb of God, who taketh sins away.
The *Agnus Dei* were their only prayers;
One word there was in all, their measure one,
So that among them concord seemed complete.
"O Master, are these spirits, that I hear?"
I asked. And he to me: "Thou judgest well;
The knot of anger they are loosening."
"Now who art thou, that cleavest here our smoke,
And speakest of us, even as if thou
Wert measuring the time by calends still?"
Thus was it spoken by a single voice;
Whereon my Master said: "Reply to it,
And ask if we go upward by this way."
And I: "O creature, that dost cleanse thyself,
That thou mayst go before thy Maker fair,
Thou shalt hear wonders, if thou go with me."
It answered: "I will follow thee as far
As is allowed; if smoke prevent our seeing,
Then hearing in its stead shall keep us joined."
Then I began: "With that envelopment
Which death dissolves, I journey upward; hither
Through the infernal anguish have I come;
As God has so included me in grace
That he has willed that I should see his court
In manner all unknown to modern use,
Conceal not who thou wast before thy death,
But tell me; and, too, if I rightly go
Unto the pass; thy words shall be our escort."

"I was a Lombard; Marco was my name;
I knew the world, and loved that worth at which
The bow of every one is now unbent;
For mounting upward thou dost go aright."
Thus he replied, and added: "I beseech
That when thou art above thou pray for me."
And I to him: "I bind me by my faith
To do what thou dost bid me; but I burst
With inward doubt, if I free not my mind.
What first was single, is now double grown
Through thy discourse, which makes that sure to me,
Both here and elsewhere, which I join to it.
The world is, to be sure, as utterly
Deserted by all virtue as thou say'st,
And big and covered with iniquity;
But I would pray that thou point out the cause,
That I may see and show it then to others;
For one puts it in heaven, another here."
A deep-drawn sigh, that grief closed with an "Oh!"
He uttered first; then: "Brother," he began,
"The world is blind; thou cam'st from it in truth.
Ye who are living would refer each cause
To the heavens above alone, as if they swept
All things with them by some necessity.
If this were so, in you would be destroyed
Free-will, and then it were not just to feel
Joy for the good, and for the evil, grief.
Your movements heaven begins; I say not, all,
But even if we grant that it were said,
A light is given you for good and ill,
And a free will, which, if it bear the pain
In its first battles with the heavens, then
Will conquer utterly, if nurtured well.
To greater force and better nature ye

Free subjects are, and that creates in you
The mind, which heaven has not in its charge.
But if the present world has gone astray,
Within you is the cause, seek it within,
And I will now be a true spy of it.
It issues from His hand,—who loves it ere
It has its being,—and is playful, like
A little maiden with her tears and smiles,
The soul in ignorant simplicity,
Save that, as from a joyous Maker sprung,
It gladly turns to that which gives it joy.
Of a slight good at first it has a taste;
Beguiled thereby, it then runs after it,
Unless a guide or curb should turn its love.
Whence it was needful to make law a curb,
Needful to have a king, who might discern
Of the true city at the least the tower.
The laws exist, but who puts hand to them?
No man, because the shepherd who leads on
May chew the cud, but lacks the parted hoof.
Wherefore the people, who behold their guide
Aim only at that good, of which themselves
Are greedy, feed on that and ask no more.
Well canst thou see that evil leadership
Has been the cause that made the world to sin,
Not Nature that in you has grown corrupt.
Rome, that has turned the world to good, was wont
To have two suns, enabling men to see
Both paths, that of the world, and God's.
Now one has quenched the other, and the sword
Is joined unto the crozier; and the two
Must of necessity go ill together:
For they fear not each other, when conjoined.
If thou believe not, see the ripened ear,

For by its seed shall every herb be known.
That land where flow the Adige and the Po
Was wont to know true worth and courtesy,
Ere Frederick had strife; and now it might
In all security be journeyed through
By whosoever out of shame would shun
The discourse or the nearness of the good.
Three old men are still there, indeed, in whom
Old times rebuke the new; they find it long
Ere God remove them to the better life:
Corrado da Palazzo, good Gherardo,
And Guido da Castello, better named
The simple Lombard, as the Frenchmen say.
Say henceforth that the Church of Rome confounds
Two powers in herself, and in the mire
Fallen, defiles her burden and herself."
"My Marco," said I, "thou hast reasoned well;
Now I discern why from inheritance
The sons of Levi were cut off; but, pray,
Who is Gherardo, who, thou say'st, remains
As an example of that race extinct,
And in reproval of this barbarous age?"
"Either thy words deceive me," answered he,
"Or test me, since, despite thy Tuscan speech,
Thou seem'st of good Gherardo to know naught.
I know him by no other name, unless
His daughter Gaia furnish one to me.
May God be with you! Further I come not.
Thou seest yon whiteness, beaming through the smoke,
Grow brighter now; that is the Angel there;
I must depart ere I am seen of him."
With this he turned, and would not hear me more.

CANTO XVII

If ever in the mountains, reader, clouds
Have shut thee in, through which thou couldst not see,
Except as moles do through their skin, recall
How, when the humid and dense vapors first
Began to grow less thick, the round sun's rays
Come feebly through; then easy is the task
Of thy imagination to behold
How now at first I saw again the sun,
Already sinking to his resting-place.
So, following my Master's faithful steps,
I issued forth from such a cloud to rays
Already from the low shores passed away.
O thou imaginative power, that dost
At times so snatch us from the things without
One heeds not, though a thousand trumpets sound,
Who moves thee, if the sense offer thee naught?
Light moves thee, which in heaven by itself
Takes form, or by His will who sends it down.
On my imagination then was stamped
The loveless wrath of her, whose form was changed
Into that bird's, who most delights to sing;
And at the time my mind was so restrained
Within itself, that nothing from without
Could come that would be taken in by it.
Then like a rain in my deep fantasy
Came down one crucified, scornful and fierce
In aspect, and as such was meeting death.
The great Ahasuerus stood near by;
Esther, his wife, and Mordecai the just,
Who was so upright both in word and deed.
And when as of itself this image burst

Like to a bubble when the water fails
Of which it had been made, before me rose
In vision, weeping bitterly, a maid
Who said these words: "O Queen, what was the cause
That thou didst will in anger to be naught?
When, not to lose Lavinia, thou didst slay
Thyself, thou didst lose me; mother, 'tis I,
And I mourn thine, before another's death."
As when upon a sudden a new light
Strikes the closed eyes, and sleep is broken off,
But quivers ere it wholly dissipates,
So what I was imagining fell down,
As soon as I was smitten in the face
By light far more intense than we know here.
I turned me round to see where I might be,
When a voice said: " 'Tis here that one ascends,"
And moved my mind from every other thought.
It put within my will such eagerness
To look upon the one who spoke the words,
It will not rest till it come face to face.
As in the sun whose light weighs down our eyes,
And who by his excess veils his own form,
In such a way my power was failing there.
"This is a spirit come from God, who shows
The upward way to us without our prayer,
And hides himself within his very light.
He deals with us as one does with himself,
For whoso, knowing need, waits to be begged,
Sets himself then malignly to refuse.
According to his bidding let us go,
And strive to mount before the darkness come,
For then we may not till the day returns."
Thus spoke my Leader, and together now
Toward a stairway we had turned to go;

As soon as I had reached the lowest step
I felt near me as 'twere a moving wing,
A fanning of my face, and heard: "*Beati*
Pacifici, from evil anger free."
The last rays, just before the coming night,
Had risen so high above us that the stars
Began appearing now on many sides.
"My strength, why dost thou seem to melt away?"
Thus to myself I said, because I felt
The power of my legs was put in truce.
We had attained the place where now the stair
Mounted no further, and were fixed, as when
A ship arriving has come up to shore;
And I stood listening a little while
If any sound there were on this new round;
Then, turning to my Master, said to him:
"Tell me, sweet Father, what offence it is
That in this circle where we are is purged?
Although our feet be stayed, stay not thy words."
And he to me: "The love of good, come short
Of what it should effect, is here restored;
The oar ill-slackened here is plied again.
But that thou understand more clearly yet,
Direct thy mind to me and thou shalt pluck
Some good fruit of this tarrying. My son,
Neither Creator nor created one,"
Thus he began, "was ever without love,
By nature or by will; and this thou knowest.
The natural is always without error;
The other love may err through evil end,
Or for its lack, or e'en excess, of strength.
But while directed to the primal goods,
And in the secondary, moderate,
It cannot be a cause of ill delight;

Yet when it turns to wrong, or with more care
Or less than it should have, hastens toward good,
The creature works against its Maker then.
Hence thou mayst understand that love must be
The seed in you of all your worth, and too
Of every act that merits punishment.
Now, since Love cannot turn aside its face
From the well-being of its subject, so
All things are safe from hatred of themselves;
And, since no being can be deemed apart,
And by itself existing, from the First,
Affection is cut off from hating Him.
It follows, if I judge discerningly,
The harm one loves is of his neighbor; now,
This love is born in three ways in your clay:
One man, if but his neighbor be suppressed,
Hopes to excell, and for this solely longs,
That from his greatness he may be brought low;
Another fears to lose his power, favor,
Honor and fame, because of others' rise,
And grows so sad, he loves the contrary;
And still another seems through injury
So angered, he grows greedy of revenge;
And such a one must work another's harm.
This three-fold love is mourned for down below;
Now I desire that thou shouldst learn of that
Which hastens to the good, disordinate.
Each one confusedly thinks of a Good,
In which the mind may rest, and longs for it;
And therefore each one strives to come to it.
If love be slow that draws you to behold
Or to acquire it, just repentance comes
And on this cornice ye have pain for it.
Another good there is that brings no joy;

It is not joy, not the essential part,
That is both fruit and root of every good.
The love that yields itself too much to this
Is mourned for in three circles over us;
But by what reasoning its parts are three
I say not, that thou search them for thyself."

CANTO XVIII

The lofty Teacher had concluded thus
His reasoning, and was intent to read
Upon my face, if I were satisfied;
And I, already driven by new thirst,
Was silent outwardly, saying within:
"Perchance my too much asking burdens him."
But that true Father, who perceived the wish
That timidly had not disclosed itself,
By speaking gave me courage now to speak.
Wherefore I said: "My Master, in thy light
My sight is quickened so, I clearly see
Whatever thy discourse imports or shows;
But I beseech thee, Father sweet and dear,
Expound the love to which thou dost reduce
Every good action and its opposite."
"Direct," said he, "toward me the sharpened sight
Of intellect, and to thee shall be clear
The error of the blind who will be guides.
The soul which is created quick to love
Moves easily to all that pleases it
Soon as by pleasure it is roused to act.
Your apprehension draws of what is true
An image, and displays it in your mind,
So that it makes the mind turn unto it.
And if thus turned it bend itself thereto,

This bending is its love; 'tis Nature's self,
That is through pleasure newly bound in you.
For even as the fire is upward borne
By reason of its form, born to aspire
Where it abides the most in its own matter,
So does the captive mind move to desire,
Which is the spirit's motion, and ne'er rests
Until the thing beloved makes it rejoice.
Now canst thou see how deeply hidden is
The truth from all those people who aver
That in itself all love is to be praised;
Because, perchance, the matter that it seeks
Seems always good; but yet not every seal
Is good, however good may be the wax."
"Thy words and my wit following after them,
Reveal to me what love is," answered I.
"But this has made my mind conceive more doubt;
If from without love is thus offered us,
And on no other footing moves the soul,
Go right or wrong, the merit is not hers."
And he to me: "As far as reason sees,
That I may tell; what is beyond, expect
To learn of Beatrice; that work is faith's.
Every substantial form, that is distinct
From matter and united with it, has
Specific virtue gathered in itself,
Which, if not operating, is not felt,
Nor ever shows itself, but in effects,
As life within a plant by the green leaves.
Therefore the source whence comes the intelligence
Of first cognitions, man knows not, nor whence
The linking for the first things we desire,
Which is in us as in the bee the zeal
To make the honey; and this primal wish

Admits of no desert of praise or blame.
That every other wish conform to this,
The virtue that gives counsel is inborn
In you to hold the threshold of assent.
This is the principle whence is derived
The measure of your merit, as it shall
Receive and winnow good and evil loves.
Those who by reasoning have searched the depths
Learned of this liberty that is innate,
And so gave moral science to the world.
So, though we grant that of necessity
All love that burns within you should arise,
Within you too is power to restrain.
This noble virtue Beatrice understands
As freedom of the will; so see that thou
Remember it, if she should speak thereof."
The moon slow-moving toward the midnight hour
Was making now the stars seem few to us,
Herself in form a bucket all on fire.
She moved against the heavenly course on paths
The Roman sees the setting sun inflame
Between Sardinia and Corsica.
The gentle shade, through whom Pietola
Has greater fame than Mantua herself,
Had laid the burden down that I imposed;
And I, who had been garnering his words
Open and plain about my questionings,
Stood like a man who wanders drowsily.
But suddenly was taken from me there
All drowsiness, by people who behind
Our backs had come upon us in their round.
As once Ismenus and Asopus saw
Upon their banks at night fury and rout,
If but the Thebans needed Bacchus' aid,

So on this circle swept upon their way,
  By what I saw of them as they came on,
  Those whom good will and righteous love bestride.
They were upon us soon, because they all
  In that great throng were moving at a run;
  And two in front were shouting, as they wept:
"And Mary ran unto the hills in haste;"
  "Caesar to bring Ilerda 'neath the yoke
  Did sting Marseilles and hasten into Spain."
"Swift, swift, that no time may be lost because
  Of little love," the others cried behind,
  "And zeal in good may make grace once more green."
"O people in whom sharpened fervor now
  Redeems perchance neglect and the delay
  Ye practised through lukewarmness in good deeds,
This one who lives,—and surely I lie not,—
  Would fain go up when sunlight comes again;
  So tell us where the opening is near."
These words were spoken by my Leader; then
  One of those spirits said to him: "Come thou
  Behind us, and so thou shalt find the gap.
We are so full of eagerness to move,
  We can not tarry; therefore, pray, forgive,
  If thou esteem this justice churlishness.
San Zeno's abbot in Verona once
  Was I, beneath good Barbarossa's rule,
  Of whom in sorrow Milan still is talking.
And such a one with one foot in the grave
  Shall for that monastery soon lament,
  And be in sadness for his power there;
Because his son, evil in all his frame,
  And worse in mind, and too of evil birth,
  In place of its true shepherd he put there."
I know not whether he said more, or ceased,

So far already had he run ahead;
But this I heard and gladly have retained.
And he who was my help in every need
Said to me then: "Now turn thee to this side;
See two of them that come, biting at sloth."
They followed all the others, as they said:
"The people for whose sake the sea was parted
Had died before the Jordan saw its heirs;"
And thus: "That folk, that with Anchises' son
Did not endure the toil unto the end,
Gave themselves up to life inglorious."
And when those shades were parted now so far
From us, that they no longer could be seen,
A new thought rose within my mind, from which
Still others, many and diverse, sprang up;
And I so strayed from one thought to the next,
That I had closed my eyes through wandering,
And so transmuted thinking into dream.

CANTO XIX

It was the hour when, vanquished by the earth
Or Saturn's rays betimes, the heat of day
Can warm no more the coldness of the moon;
When geomancers see before the dawn
Their Greater Fortune in the eastern sky
Rise by a way that stays but briefly dusk;
I saw in dream a woman, stammering,
With squinting eyes, and crooked on her feet,
Her hands deformed, her features colorless.
I gazed at her and as the sunshine brings
Comfort to chilly limbs that night weighs down,
So did my look make nimble then her tongue,

And thereupon in but a little time
Made her all straight, and to her pallid face
Did give the color love would look for there.
And as she had her power of speech thus freed,
Then she began to sing in such a way,
I hardly could have turned my mind from her.
"I am," she sang, "I am the Siren sweet,
That in mid-sea bewitch the mariners,
So full am I of pleasure to be heard.
I turned Ulysses from his wandering way
With song of mine; and he who with me grows
Familiar, rarely goes, I please him so."
Her mouth was not yet closed, when there appeared
A lady of a saintly mien, prepared
Beside me to bring that one to dismay.
"O Virgil, Virgil, who is this?" said she
Disdainfully; and he approached with eyes
Fixed then upon the modest one alone.
She seized the other, and opening her in front,
Rending the clothes, showed me her belly; then
I woke because of stench that came from it.
I turned my eyes, and the good Master said:
"At least three times I called thee; rise and come,
And let us find the gate where thou mayst enter."
I rose; the circles of the holy Mount
Already were all full of the high day,
And we went on, the new sun at our backs.
While following him I bore my brow like one
Who has it heavy laden with his thought,
And makes himself a half arch of a bridge,
When I heard said: "Come ye, the passage-way
Is here," and in a way so mild and kind
As we ne'er hear within this mortal pale.
With wings outspread, that seemed as of a swan,

He, who had spoken thus, directed us
Upward between two walls of the hard rock.
He moved his pinions then, and fanning us,
Proclaimed *qui lugent* to be of the blest,
For they shall have their hearts in comfort rich.
"What ails thee, that thou lookest only down
Upon the ground?" my Guide began to say,
When we had passed a little the Angel's place.
"With such suspicion I am made to go
By a new vision that so draws me down,
I cannot rid me of the thought of it."
"Hast thou then seen," said he, "that ancient witch
Who is alone lamented for above?
Hast thou beheld how man is freed from her?
Let it suffice; strike with thy heels the earth;
Thine eyes turn upward to the lure, which He,
The Eternal King, whirls onward with the spheres."
As when the falcon looks, first at his feet,
Then turns him at the cry, and stretches forth
With longing for the food that draws him there,
Such I became, and such, as far as reached
The cleft to make a way for him who mounts,
I made the ascent to where the round begins.
When I on this fifth cornice came forth free,
I saw upon it those who were in tears,
And lay there with their faces to the earth.
"*Adhaesit pavimento anima mea,*"
I heard them uttering with such deep sighs,
The words were hardly to be understood.
"O ye elect of God, whose sufferings
Both hope and justice make less hard to bear,
Direct us, pray, unto the high ascents."
"If safe from lying prostrate ye have come,
And would in briefest time find out the way,

E'er to the outside let your right hands be."
Thus prayed the Poet, and was answered thus
A little way in front of us; and I
Observed what else was hidden as he spoke;
And then I turned my eyes unto my Lord;
Whereon with a glad sign he gave assent
To what the look of my desire had craved.
When I could with myself do as I would,
I drew near where that creature lay, whose words
Had first attracted me, and said to him:
"O spirit, in whom grief is ripening
That without which one cannot turn to God,
Suspend a while for me thy greater care.
Who wast thou, and why have ye thus your backs
Turned upward, tell me, if thou wouldst that I
Procure thee aught there whence I came alive."
And he to me: "Why heaven turns our backs
Toward itself, thou yet shalt know, but first,
Scias quod ego fui successor Petri.
'Twixt Sestri and Chiaveri there comes down
A stream that is beautiful, and of its name
The title of my race makes its chief boast.
A month and little more I felt his load
Who keeps the ample mantle from the mire;
Such weight, all other burdens are but feathers.
I was converted late, alas! but when
I had become the Roman Shepherd, then
I made discovery of how false life is.
I saw that there the heart came not to rest,
And could not mount up higher in that life;
So love of this was kindled in my soul.
Up to that moment I had been a soul
Wretched, apart from God, all avarice;
Now as thou seest I am punished here.

What avarice effects is here made known
  In the purgation of converted souls;
  More bitter punishment the Mount has not.
Even as there our eye was not raised up
  To things on high, but fixed on those of earth,
  So justice here has sunk it to the earth.
Even as avarice there quenched our love
  Of every good, and hence our work was lost,
  So justice here is holding us in bonds,
Bound as we are and captive, hand and foot;
  As long as the just Lord shall please, so long
  Shall we stay here, outstretched and motionless."
I had knelt down, and had in mind to speak;
  But when I was beginning, he perceived,
  Merely by listening, my reverence,
And said: "What reason is it bends thee down?"
  And I: "By reason of your dignity
  My conscience stung me that I stood erect."
"Straighten thy legs, my brother," answered he,
  "And rise; for likewise with thee and the rest
  I am a fellow servant to One Power.
If ever thou didst understand the words
  Of Holy Gospel: *'Neque nubent,'* then
  Thou mayst know well why I am speaking so.
Now go thy way; I bid thee stay no more;
  Thy tarrying is obstructive to my tears,
  With which I ripen that which thou hast said.
Yonder I have a niece, Alagia named,
  Good in herself, provided that our house
  By its example cause her not to sin;
And she alone is left me on the earth."

CANTO XX

A WILL strives ill against a better one;
  Wherefore against my pleasure, to please him,
  I drew the sponge unfilled from out the water.
I moved on; and my Leader moved along
  The unobstructed places by the rock,
  As on a wall we graze the battlements.
For they, through whose eyes here fell drop by drop
  The evil that possesses all the world,
  On the other side approached too near the edge.
A malediction on thee, old she-wolf,
  That more than all the other beasts hast prey,
  For this thine endless hunger, cavernous!
O Heaven, by whose revolution men
  Believe conditions here below are changed,
  When will he come, through whom she shall depart?
We went along with slow and scanty steps,
  And I intent upon the shades I heard
  Lamenting and bewailing piteously;
I heard by chance in front of us a voice
  Cry out: "Sweet Mary!" as it were with tears,
  Like to a woman in the pangs of birth;
And then there followed this: "Thou wast so poor,
  As men may judge of by that hostelry,
  Where thou didst lay thy holy burden down."
And following, this: "O good Fabricius,
  Virtue with poverty thou didst prefer
  Above great riches with iniquity."
So pleasing were these words to me, I went
  Still further on, that I might learn to know
  The spirit from whom they had seemed to come.
It had not ceased to speak, and now it told

How Nicholas gave largess to the maids,
That they in honor might conduct their youth.
"O soul that speakest so much good," said I,
"Pray, tell me who thou wast, and why alone
Thou dost renew these words of worthy praise?
Thy speech shall not be without recompense,
If I return to finish the short way
Of that life that is flying to its goal."
And he: "If I do tell thee, it is not
Because I seek for comfort from the earth,
But for that grace, that shines in thee ere death.
I was the root whence sprang that evil plant,
Which casts such shade o'er all the Christian land
That good fruit is but rarely plucked from it.
But if Douai, Lille, Ghent and Bruges had
The power, vengeance would be taken soon;
And I implore it of the Judge of all.
Hugh Capet was my name on earth; of me
Are born the Philips and the Louises,
By whom in recent days France has been ruled.
I was the son of a Parisian butcher;
And when the ancient kings had come to end,
Save only one who clad himself in gray,
I found that I held fast in hand the reins
Of government within the realm, and power
Of new-got lands, and had such store of friends,
That to the crown thus widowed, my son's head
Was then promoted, and it is with him
Began the consecrated bones of those.
So long as the great dowry of Provence
Had not yet taken from my race its shame,
It was of little power, but did no ill.
Then it began with force and lying fraud
Its plundering; and later, for amends,

Took Normandy, Ponthieu and Gascony.
Charles came to Italy, and, for amends,
Made Conradin his victim; and then next
Thrust Thomas back to heaven, for amends.
I see a time, not far off from today,
Which shall draw forth another Charles from France
To make both him and his still better known.
Unarmed he comes, alone, and with the lance
That Judas jousted with; and thrusts it so,
That he shall make the paunch of Florence burst.
Thence he shall gain, not land, but sin and shame,
For him so much the heavier, as he
The lighter has esteemed such injury.
The other, who comes captive from a ship,
I see make his own daughter merchandise,
Haggling as corsairs do with other slaves.
What canst thou, avarice, do more with us,
When thou so drawest my kindred to thyself,
That it cares not for its own flesh and blood?
That past and future ill may both seem less,
I see to Alagna come the Fleur-de-lys,
And in His vicar's person Christ made captive.
I see Him to be mocked a second time;
I see the vinegar and gall renewed,
And Him 'twixt living robbers put to death.
I see in the new Pilate cruelty
Not satisfied with this, but, without law,
Entering the Temple with his greedy sails.
When shall I, O my Lord, rejoice to see
Thy vengeance wrought, which, being hidden, makes
The anger in Thy secret counsel sweet?
What of the Holy Spirit's only Bride
I was first saying, and which made thee turn
In my direction for some gloss of it,

Was as an answer to our prayers, as long
  As the day lasts; but when the night has come,
  Contrary sound we utter in its stead.
Then we repeat Pygmalion's story, how
  His hungering for gold insatiate
  Made him a traitor, thief and parricide;
And avaricious Midas' misery,
  Which followed on the prayer his greed had made,
  And which deserves immortal ridicule;
The foolish Achan each one calls to mind,
  And how he stole the spoils, so that the wrath
  Of Joshua seems still to bite him here;
Sapphira and her husband we accuse;
  We praise the kicks that Heliodorus had;
  And Polymnestor's infamy sweeps on,
The Mountain round, for Polydorus' death;
  Here, last of all, we cry out: 'Crassus, pray,
  Tell us, thou knowest it, what is the taste of gold?'
Sometimes we speak, one loud, another low,
  As our affection spurs our utterance
  Either to greater or to lesser pace;
So in the good we speak of here by day,
  I was not then alone; but here near by
  No other person lifted up his voice."
We had already started on from him,
  And now were striving to go on our way
  As far as was permitted to our power,
When I perceived a trembling of the Mount,
  As of a thing in falling; and a chill
  Seized me, as it does one who goes to death.
Certainly Delos was not shaken so
  Before Latona made her nest in it
  To bring forth there the two eyes of the heavens.
Then there began on every side a cry,

Such that the Master drew toward me, and said:
"Fear not, as long as I shall be thy guide."
"*Gloria in excelsis Deo,*" all were saying,
By what I understood from those near by,
Whose cry I had been able to make out;
All motionless and in suspense we stood,
Like to the shepherds who first heard the song,
Until the trembling ceased, and then it stopped.
Then we resumed our holy journeying,
Watching the shades that lay there on the ground,
Returned already to their wonted plaint.
Never with such assault did ignorance
Make me desirous to inform myself,
If memory is true to me in this,
As I seemed then subjected to in thought;
But, for our haste, I did not dare to ask,
And by myself I could see nothing there;
So I went on, timid and deep in thought.

CANTO XXI

THE innate thirst that is ne'er satisfied,
Save with the water asked for as a boon
By the poor woman of Samaria,
Distressed me, and I felt the spur of haste,
Following my Leader on the obstructed way,
And the just vengeance made me share the pain;
When lo, as Luke writes for us how the Christ,
Already risen from the sepulchral cave,
Appeared unto the two upon the way,
A shade appeared to us, behind us first,
Watching the crowd that lay there at its feet;
Nor had we noticed it until it spoke,

Saying: "My brothers, may God give you peace!"
We turned at once, and Virgil made such sign
As was befitting, and beginning said:
"Into the council of the blest mayst thou
Be brought in peace, by that true court which sends
Me back into eternal banishment."
"What?" said he, as we went on actively,
"If ye are shades that God deigns not above,
Who has come with you by His stairs so far?"
My Teacher answered: "If thou seest the marks,
Which this one bears and which the Angel drew,
Thou knowest that with the good 'tis meet he reign.
But since that one, who spins both day and night,
Had not yet ceased to draw the flax for him,
Which Clotho lays and packs for every one,
His soul, which is the sister of us both,
Ascending, could not come alone, because
Not seeing in our manner; therefore I
Was drawn forth from the ample jaws of Hell
To be his guide, and I shall guide him on
As far as what I teach has power to lead.
But tell us, if thou knowest, why just now
The Mountain trembles so, and why all seemed
E'en down to its soft base, to give one cry?"
His questions aimed so through the needle's eye
Of my desire, that simply with the hope
My thirst became less eager to be quenched.
That one began: "This Mountain's holy laws
Know naught that is without due ordering,
Or is outside the bounds of common use.
This place is free from every change; of this,
That Heaven receives its own unto itself,
Occasion may be here, but of naught else.
Wherefore no rain, nor hail, nor snow, nor dew,

Nor hoar-frost ever falls here higher up
Than the small stairway of the three short steps.
Nor are there clouds, or dense or thin, that come,
Nor lightning; Thaumas' daughter comes not here,
Who often changes place in yonder skies.
Dry vapor rises from below no higher
Than to the topmost step of which I spoke,
And where the feet of Peter's vicar rest.
It may be much or little lower down
It quakes; but with wind hidden in the earth
I know not how, it never trembled here.
It quakes here when a soul perceives itself
All cleansed, so that it rises or begins
To mount on high, and such shouts follow it.
Of being cleansed the will alone gives proof,
Which comes upon the soul now free to change
Its home, and with volition pleases it.
It wills indeed before, but that desire
Forbids, which by God's justice seeks the pain,
As formerly the sin, and checks the will.
And I, who in this suffering have lain
Five hundred years and more, only just now
Felt my will free to seek a better place.
Therefore the earthquake came, which thou didst feel,
And pious souls throughout the Mount gave praise
To God; and may He send them soon above!"
Those were his words to us; and as delight
In drinking is as great as was the thirst,
I cannot say how much he did me good.
And the wise Leader: "Now I see the net
Which holds you here, and how one is unsnared,
Whence comes the earthquake, and the common joy.
May it please thee that I learn now who thou wast;
And may thy words make clear to me why thou

Wast lying here so many centuries."
"It was the time when the good Titus' arms,
Helped by the King Most High, avenged the wounds,
Whence issued forth the blood that Judas sold,
That I," this spirit answered, "lived on earth,
With most enduring and most honoring name,
Great in renown, but not as yet with faith.
The spirit of my voice was then so sweet,
Rome drew me from Toulouse to her, and there
I earned the myrtle crown that decked my brows.
Statius they name me yonder still; of Thebes,
And then of great Achilles was my song,
But with this load I fell beside the way.
Seed to my ardor were the sparks, that were
So warm within me, of that flame divine
From which more than a thousand take their fire;
I speak of the Aeneid, which to me
Was mother, and was nurse in poesy;
Without it I had not a drachma's weight.
And if I could have been alive on earth
When Virgil lived, I would consent to owe
A sun more than I do for my release."
These words turned Virgil toward me with a look
Which in its stillness said to me: "Be still!"
But virtue cannot do all that it will;
Laughter and tears are such quick followers
On passion, in which each has had its source,
That those most true obey the will the least.
I only smiled, as one who makes a sign;
Whereat the shade spoke not, but looked at me
Into my eyes, where soul is steadiest.
"So may thy toil attain its end of good,"
Said he, "why did thy countenance but now
Display to me the flashing of a smile?"

Now am I caught, as 'twere, on either side;
One keeps me silent, and the other begs
That I may speak; I sigh; my Master knows
My thought, and says to me: "Fear not to speak,
But speak to him, and give him answer now
To what he asks with so great eagerness."
Wherefore I said: "Perchance thou marvelest,
O ancient spirit, that I should have laughed;
But may a greater wonder seize thy mind!
This one who guides on high my eyes is he,
That Virgil, from whom thou didst first derive
Thy power to sing of men and of the gods.
If thou didst think that aught else made me laugh,
Leave such a thought untrue, and, pray, believe,
It was the words that thou didst speak of him."
Already he was bending to embrace
My Teacher's knees; but he said: "Brother, no,
Thou art a shade, and lookest on a shade."
Rising he said: "Now thou canst know how great
The love is that so warms my heart for thee,
That I can lose from mind our emptiness,
And treat our shades as though a solid thing."

CANTO XXII

Already was the Angel left behind,
The Angel, who, erasing from my face
A stroke, had turned our steps to this sixth round;
And those, whose longing is for righteousness,
He had proclaimed *Beati,* and his words
Had closed with *sitiunt,* without the rest.
Lighter than through the other passages
I was advancing with no effort now,

Following upward the swift spirits' lead,
When Virgil spoke, beginning: "Love that burns
From Virtue's kindling ever kindles more,
If but its flame be manifest without;
So, from that hour when Juvenal came down
To us within Hell's limbo, and made known
To me thy heart's affection, my good will
Toward thee was such, that more did never bind
The heart unto a person not yet seen;
And so these stairs will now seem short to me.
But tell me, and forgive me as a friend,
If confidence let loose my rein too much,
And as a friend henceforward talk with me:
How was it possible that avarice
Found place within thy breast amid such store
Of wisdom as thy diligence brought there?"
These words at first moved Statius somewhat
To laughter, but he answered presently:
"Thine every word is a dear proof of love.
'Tis true that many times appear such things
As give false matter to our doubts, because
The reasons that are true lie there concealed.
Thy question shows me that thou dost believe
That I was avaricious in yon life,
Perchance because of that round where I was.
Now know that avarice was too far off
From me, and this excess of difference
Thousands of moons have seen me punished for;
And if I had not set my care aright,
When I observed where thy words did break forth,
As if indignant with our human nature:
'Through what dost thou not drive, accursed thirst
Of gold, the appetite of mortal men?'
I should now, rolling, feel the dismal jousts.

Then I perceived how, when they spend, our hands
Could spread their wings too wide, and I repented
As well of this as of my other sins.
How many when they rise will have shorn locks,
Through ignorance, which lets them not repent
Of such a sin in life, not even at last!
Know that a fault, whose opposition is
Direct against a sin, repelling it,
With that together here must dry its green.
Therefore, if I have been among that folk
Lamenting avarice, to cleanse my soul,
It thus befell me for its opposite."
"Now when thy song was of the cruel arms
Borne to Jocasta's two-fold sorrowing,"
Then said the singer of bucolic lays,
"By what thou touchest there with Clio's aid,
Thou wast not yet made faithful by the faith,
Without which man's good works are not enough.
If this be so, what was the sun, or what
The candles that dispelled thy darkness so
That thou set sail behind the Fisherman?"
And he to him: "Thou at the first didst send
Me to Parnassus to drink in its caves,
And afterwards thou gav'st me light to God.
Thou didst like one, who walking in the night
Carries a light behind, not for himself,
But making wise those that do follow him,
When thou saidst: 'Now the world renews itself;
Justice returns, and the first days of men,
And from the heavens new progeny descends.'
Through thee I was a poet, and through thee
A Christian; but that thou mayst see what now
I draw, my hand shall lay the color on.
Already had the whole world been prepared

For true belief, the seed of which was sown
By the eternal kingdom's messengers;
And thine own saying, just now spoken of,
So harmonized with the new preachers' words,
It soon became my wont to visit them.
And later they appeared such holy men,
That, when Domitian persecuted them,
Their lamentations did not lack my tears.
As long as after that I was on earth
I succored them; their upright practices
Made me despise all other sects; but ere
I in my poem had led on the Greeks
Unto the streams of Thebes, I was baptized;
But out of fear Christian in secrecy
I long made outward show of paganism;
And this lukewarmness kept me circling on,
More than four centuries on that fourth round.
Thou, therefore, who hast raised the covering,
Which hid from me the good of which I speak,
While yet in the ascent we have the time,
Tell me where now our ancient Terence is,
Caecilius, Plautus, Varro, if thou know'st;
Tell me if they are damned, and in what place."
"They, Persius too, and I, and many more,"
My Leader answered him, "are with that Greek
The Muses suckled as none ever since,
In the dark prison's first encircling space.
There oftentimes our talk is of the mount,
With those who nursed us ever on its slopes.
We have Euripides and Antiphon,
Simonides and Agathon, and Greeks
Yet many more, whose brows were laurel-crowned;
And of thy people there Antigone,
Argia and Deiphyle are seen;

Ismene, still as sad as when on earth;
And she who showed Langia; Thetis, too;
Deidamia with her sisters, and
She who was daughter of Tiresias."
Both of the poets now had ceased to speak,
Intent anew on looking to all sides,
When they were free from climbing and from walls;
And now the first four maidens of the day
Remained behind, while at the pole the fifth
Directed upward still its blazing point;
My Leader said: "I think it best that we
Turn our right shoulders to the outer edge,
Circling the Mount as we are wont to do."
Thus at that point usage became our guide;
And we went on our way with much less doubt
For the assenting of that worthy soul.
They went along in front, and I, alone
Behind them, listened to the words they spoke,
Which gave me teaching in the art of verse.
But soon their pleasant talk was broken off
When we came on a tree right in the way,
With apples on it, sweet to smell and good.
And as a fir-tree tapers to the top
From branch to branch, so that one downward grew,
I think so that no one might go beyond.
On that side where our path was thus cut off
Clear water streamed down from the lofty rock,
And spread itself, in falling, o'er the leaves.
When the two poets had drawn near the tree,
A voice that issued from within the leaves
Cried out: "Of this food ye shall suffer dearth."
Then said: "Mary was thinking more of how
The wedding might be honorably complete,
Than of her mouth, which answers now for you;

The Roman dames of old for all their drink
Were satisfied with water; Daniel
Despised his food and learned how to be wise;
The primal age was beautiful as gold,
And made with hunger acorns savory,
And made with thirst nectar of every stream;
Honey and locusts were the viands that
Nourished the Baptist in the wilderness;
Wherefore his name is glorious, and so great
As in the Gospel is revealed to you."

CANTO XXIII

While thus through the green foliage I peered,
As he is wont to do, who wastes his life
After the little birds, he who was more
Than father to me said: "My son, come now,
Because the time that is allotted us,
Must be apportioned to a better use."
I turned my face, and not less readily
My steps, toward the Sages, whose discourse
Was such as made my going of no cost.
And lo, a sound of song through tears was heard:
"*Labia mea, Domine,*" that gave
Both joy and pain to hear, such were its notes.
"Sweet Father, what is that," thus I began,
"That I am hearing?" And he said: "The shades,
That going loose the knot of debt, perchance."
As thoughtful pilgrims do, who overtake
People unknown to them upon their way,
And turn to look at them, but tarry not;
Behind us came, and with their quicker pace
Went by, glancing at us and wondering,

A throng of souls, all silent and devout.
Each one had dark, deep-sunken eyes, a face
Of pallor, and was so emaciate,
The skin gave but the form of bones beneath.
I do not think that Erysichthon was
So to a very skin withered away,
When in his starving he was most afraid.
I said within me as I thought: "Behold
The people that did lose Jerusalem,
When Mary struck her beak into her son."
The sockets of their eyes seemed rings without
Their gems; he who reads OMO in man's face
Would surely there have recognized the M.
Who would believe an apple's fragrance so
Could govern things by waking a desire,
Or water's odor, if he knew not how?
I wondered then what made them hunger so,
What were the cause, not manifest as yet,
Of their great leanness and their wretched scurf,
When lo, from 'neath the hollow of the head
A shade had turned its eyes toward me; then stared,
And cried aloud: "What grace to me is this!"
Never should I have known him by his face;
But in his voice there was revealed to me
That which within the look was overcome.
That spark rekindled wholly in my mind
My knowledge of the features here so changed,
And now I knew again Forese's face.
"Oh, pray give not thy thought to the dry scab
That gives its color to my skin," he begged,
"Nor to my lack of flesh, but tell me truth
About thyself, and tell me who they are,
The two souls yonder that escort thee here;
Do not delay, I pray, to speak to me."

"Thy face," I answered him, "which at thy death
I wept for once, gives me as grievous cause
For mourning now, seeing it so transformed.
But tell me, in God's name, what strips you so;
Nor make me speak while I am wondering;
Full of another wish, one must speak ill."
And he to me: "In the eternal plan
Power descends upon the stream and tree
Left there behind, through which I grow so lean.
These people, who now singing as they weep,
Have followed appetite beyond due bounds,
Are here in thirst and hunger sanctified.
The odor of the apple and the spray
That scatters as it falls upon the green,
Kindle in us desire to eat and drink.
And not once only as we go our round
Upon this level is our pain renewed,—
Our pain, I say, but should say, our relief;—
Because that longing leads us to the tree,
Which had led Christ in happiness to say,
'Eli,' when He released us with His blood."
And I to him: "Forese, from that day
When thou didst change world to a better life,
Five years have not revolved up to this time.
If first the power in thee still to sin
Had ended, ere the hour had supervened,
Which with good grief weds us anew to God,
How is it thou didst come up hither? Still
Down there below I thought to find thee, where
Time is restored by time." And he to me:
"My Nella with her weeping that burst forth,
Is she who brought me here so soon to drink
Of the sweet wormwood of these torturings;
For with her prayers devout and with her sighs

She led me forth from where the spirits wait,
And set me free from all the other rounds.
So much more dear and precious unto God
Is my dear widow, whom I fondly loved,
As she the more is lonely in good works;
For the Barbagia of Sardinia
Shows in its women far more modesty
Than that Barbagia in which she was left
By me. What wilt thou have me say, sweet brother?
A future time is now within my sight,
To which this hour shall not be very old,
When from the pulpit it shall be forbidden
The dames of Florence, brazen-faced, to go,
Showing their bosoms with the breasts exposed.
What women ever were in Barbary,
What Saracens, that needed discipline
Of soul, or otherwise, to make them dress?
And if the shameless ones but knew of that
Which heaven speedily prepares for them,
Their mouths would be wide open now to howl;
For, if the foresight here deceive me not,
They shall be sad before the down shall come
To his cheeks, whom the lullaby now soothes.
Pray, brother, hide thyself no more from me;
Thou seest that not only I, but all
These people gaze where thou dost veil the sun."
Wherefore I said: "If thou bring back to mind,
What thou with me and I with thee have been,
The present memory will be grievous still.
From that life, he who goes in front of me
Turned me the other day, when to you here
Showed herself round the sister of that one;"
I pointed to the sun. "He through the deep
Of night has led me from the truly dead,

In this true flesh that follows after him.
Thence have his comforts brought me upward, e'er
Ascending, circling as I rise, the Mount,
Which makes you straight, made crooked in the world.
He says that he shall bear me company
Till I have come where Beatrice will be;
And I must needs remain without him there.
Virgil," to whom I pointed, "is the one
Who tells me this; this other is that shade,
For whom your kingdom quaked in every slope,
When it just now released him from itself."

CANTO XXIV

Our talk made not our steps more slow, nor did
Our steps our talk, but speaking, we went on
As freely as a ship with a good wind.
The shades, which seemed things dead a second time,
Were taking through the sockets of their eyes
A wondering gaze at me, living, they knew.
And I, continuing my words, then said:
"Perchance he is more slow in going up
Than else he would be for another's sake.
But tell me, if thou knowest, Piccarda's place;
Tell me if I see any one to note
Among these people, who so gaze at me."
"My sister, who was beautiful and good,
I know not which the more, is now in bliss,
On high Olympus crowned triumphantly."
Thus spoke he first; and then: "Here naught forbids
The naming of each one, our semblance is
Because of abstinence so dried away.
This one," pointing him out, "is Bonagiunta,

Bonagiunta of Lucca; and that face
Beyond him, more pricked through than all the rest,
Is his, who held in arms the Holy Church;
He was of Tours, and purges by his fast
Bolsena's eels and the Vernaccia wine."
And many others named he, one by one,
And with the naming, all appeared content,
So that thereat I saw not one dark look.
I saw how, in their hunger, bit the air
Ubaldin della Pila, and Boniface,
Who shepherded so many with the rook;
I saw Messer Marchese, who had once
Time, with less thirst, for drinking at Forlì,
And, even so, never felt sated there.
But as one does, who looks and then esteems
One man beyond the rest, so did I him
Of Lucca, who appeared most to desire
To know me. He was murmuring, and I heard
What seemed "Gentucca," where he felt the wound
Of justice, that so plucks them. Then I said:
"O soul, that seemest so to wish to speak
With me, so do that I may understand,
And with thy speaking satisfy us both."
"There is a woman born, who wears not yet
The veil," thus he began, "and who shall make
My city, though men blame it, dear to thee.
Thou shalt go hence with this my prophecy;
And if thou errest from my murmuring,
The truth of things shall make it to thee clear.
But tell me, am I looking at that one,
Who drew the new rhymes forth, beginning thus:
'Ladies, who have intelligence of love'?"
And I to him: "I am one who, when Love
Inspires me, note, and in the way that he

Dictates within, I give the outward form."
"O brother, now I see," said he, "the knot
That, from the sweet new style I hear, kept back
The Notary, Guittone, and myself.
I see distinctly how your pens go on,
Thus closely following the dictator's lead,
Which certainly came not to pass with ours;
And he who sets himself to further search,
Finds no more difference between the styles."
Then he was silent, as if satisfied.
And as the birds that winter by the Nile
Sometimes will make a company in air,
Then fly in greater haste, going in file,
So all the people that were gathered there,
Turning their faces, went with quicker steps,
Light through their leanness and through their desire.
And as a man weary with running, lets
His fellows go ahead, and walks himself,
Until the panting of his chest be eased,
So now Forese let this holy flock
Pass on, and came behind with me, and said:
"When shall it be that I see thee again?"
"I know not," answered I, "my length of life,
Yet my returning will not be so soon,
But that desire is earlier at the shore;
Because the place, where I was set to live,
From day to day strips itself more of good,
And seems appointed to a grievous fall."
"Now go," said he, "for that one most at fault
I see a beast draw downward at its tail
Toward that vale, where faults are never cleansed.
The beast goes on more swiftly with each step
Increasing ever, till it dashes him,
And leaves his body wretchedly undone.

Those wheels have now not far to turn," said he, 88
Raising his eyes to heaven, "ere that be clear,
Which words of mine no further may declare.
Remain thou now behind, for in this realm 91
Time is so precious, that I lose too much,
Going on thus at even pace with thee."
As sometimes at a gallop issues forth 94
A horseman from a riding troop, and goes
To win the honor of the first attack,
So parted he from me with greater strides; 97
And I remained upon the way with those,
Who had been such great marshals in the world.
When he had gone so far in front of us, 100
That my eyes were engaged in following him,
As was my mind in following his words,
Another apple-tree appeared, with boughs 103
Heavy with fruit and green, and not far off,
Because I only then turned to that side.
I saw beneath it people lift their hands, 106
And cry out toward the leaves I know not what,
Like greedy children, who beseech in vain,
And he who is besought, will answer not; 109
But, that their longing may be made more keen,
He holds high up their wish, and hides it not.
Then they departed, as if undeceived; 112
And thereupon we came to the great tree,
Which so rejects the many prayers and tears.
"Pass onward without drawing near to it; 115
A tree, which once was eaten of by Eve,
Is higher up; this plant was raised from it."
Thus 'mid the branches spoke I know not who; 118
So Virgil, Statius and myself drew close,
And by the rising side went further on.
"Bethink you," said he, "of the accursed ones, 121

Formed in the clouds, who, gorged with food and drink,
Fought against Theseus with their double breasts;
And of the Hebrews, who at drinking were
So soft, that Gideon spurned their company,
When he went down the hills toward Midian."
To one of the two margins we kept close,
And passed, hearing of sins of gluttony,
That had their sequel of distressful gains.
Then with more room upon the lonely way
Some thousand steps and more had borne us on,
Each one in contemplation, speaking not.
"What think ye of, ye three who go alone?"
A voice said suddenly; whereat I started,
As would a frightened, timid animal.
I raised my head to see who it might be;
And never in a furnace were there seen
Metals or glass so glowing or so red
As One I saw, who said: "If ye are pleased
To make the ascent, here there is need to turn;
Here he ascends, who goes in search of peace."
His aspect had bereft me of my sight;
Therefore I turned back to my Teacher's steps,
And walked as one, who follows what he hears.
As when, the herald of the dawn, the breeze
Of May stirs gently with its fragrant breath,
Impregnate with the sweet of herb and flower;
So felt I on the middle of my brow
A wind that blew, and I could feel the plumes
That brought the fragrance of ambrosia:
And I heard said: "Blessed are they, whom grace
Has so illumined, that the love of taste
Kindles within them not too great desire,
And who do ever thirst for what is just."

CANTO XXV

It was an hour when the ascent allowed
Of no delay, because the sun had left
The noon-day circle to the Bull, and night
To the Scorpion. Wherefore as does the man
Who halts not, but goes on, whate'er appear,
If he be goaded by necessity;
Thus did we enter by the narrow way,
And one before another took the stairs,
That by their narrowness part those who mount.
And as the little stork, that lifts its wings
In its desire to fly, and ventures not
To quit the nest, and lets them fall again;
Such I was, with desire, kindled and quenched,
Of questioning, to motion come at last,
Such as he makes, whose lips prepare to speak.
Then my sweet Father, though our pace was quick,
Did not refrain, but spoke: "Discharge the bow
Of speech, which thou hast drawn up to the iron."
Then confidently opening my mouth,
Thus I began: "How can one grow lean there
Where one feels not the need of nourishment?"
"If thou recall how Meleager's life
Consumed with the consuming of the brand,
This thing were not so hard to thee," he said;
"If thou shouldst think how with your quivering
Your image in the mirror quivers too,
That would seem easy that now seems so hard.
That thou mayst come to rest within thy will,
Lo, Statius here, and him I call and pray,
That he be now a healer of thy wounds."
"If in thy presence I unfold to him

The eternal view," Statius replied, "that I
May not deny thee shall be my excuse."
Then he began: "Son, if thy mind regard
My words and take them in, they will be light
Upon thy questioning. The perfect blood,
Which never is drunk up by thirsty veins
And so remains behind, like to the food
Which thou removest from the table, takes
Within the heart virtue informative
Of all the human members, being that
Which courses through the veins to change to them;
Again digested, flows to parts whereof
'Tis comelier to be silent than to speak;
Thence it distils upon another's blood
In Nature's vessel; both are there received,
Disposed, one to be passive, one to act,
Due to the perfect place whence it has sprung;
And thus conjoined, the one begins to work,
Coagulating first, then giving life
To that which it had formed to work upon.
The active virtue thus made soul,—like that
In plants, but so far different, as this
Is on its way, and that has reached its port,—
So works at length, that now it moves and feels,
Like a sea-fungus; and begins to make
Organs for powers of which it is the germ.
The virtue come from the begetter's heart,
My son, will now unfold, and now extend,
When on all members Nature is intent;
But how from animal it should become
A child, thou seest not yet; this is a point
Which led astray a wiser man than thou;
For in his teaching he made separate
From soul potential intellect, because

He saw no organ taken up by it.
Open thy breast unto the coming truth;
Know that as soon as in the embryo
The brain has been perfected in its parts,
The Primal Motor turns to it in joy
Over such art of Nature's, and inbreathes
A spirit that is new, replete with power,
Which draws all that which it finds active there
To its own substance, making all one soul,
Which lives and feels, revolving in itself.
That thou mayst wonder less at what I say,
Note how the sun's heat is turned into wine,
When joined to moisture that the vine has given.
When Lachesis has no more thread, this soul
Is let loose from the flesh, and bears away
Potentially the human and divine;
Then all the other faculties are mute;
But memory, intelligence and will,
In action keener far than e'er before.
With unarrested movement, by itself
Strangely it falls to one of the two shores,
And there first knows its ways. As soon as there
It has been circumscribed in its due place,
There radiates the virtue formative,
In form and mass as in the living members.
And as the air, when it is full of rain,
Becomes adorned with divers colorings,
Reflected in it through another's rays,
So here the neighboring air will shape itself
Into that form, which by its virtue now
The soul that stops there like a seal imprints;
And afterwards, like to the little flame
Following the fire, wherever it may move,
So its new form follows the spirit's ways.

Since after that its semblance is therefrom,
'Tis called a shade; and forms the organs then
Of every sense, even to that of sight.
Thence we have speech, and thence our laughter; thence
We have our utterance of tears and sighs,
Which thou upon the Mountain mayst have heard.
As our desires and our affections else
Impress themselves on us, the shade takes shape;
This is the cause of what thou wonderest at."
And now the final circle had been reached
By us, and we had turned toward the right,
And had become intent on other care;
At this point flames are shot forth from the bank,
While upward from this cornice breathes a blast
Throwing them back, freeing a path from them;
So one by one we were constrained to go
Along the open side, while here I feared
The fire, and there I feared I might fall down.
My Leader said: "Along this place one must
Hold tightly drawn the bridle of the eyes,
Because for little one might go astray."
"*Summae Deus clementiae*" they sang
Within the bosom of the mighty glow,
Which made me not less eager now to turn;
And I saw spirits moving through the flame,
Wherefore I looked at them and at my steps,
From time to time dividing thus my gaze.
When they had reached the ending of the hymn,
They cried out loudly: "*Virum non cognosco,*"
And then did softly recommence their song.
This finished, still they cried: "Diana kept
Within the wood, and drove out Helice,
Who tasted Venus' poison." Then again
They turned to sing; and then they cried in praise

Of women and of husbands who were chaste,
As virtue and as marriage both enjoin.
And I believe this mode suffices them
For all the time that fire is burning them;
For such the cure and such the food must be
That work the healing of the final wound.

CANTO XXVI

While thus we went along the edge, the one
Before the other, the good Master oft
Would say: "Take heed! and let my warning help."
The sun was striking my right shoulder now,
And with his rays was changing all the blue
Within the western sky to white; and I
Made ruddier the flame where I did cast
My shadow on it; yet this sign so slight
I saw observed by many passing shades.
This was the cause that gave an opening
To them to speak of me; and they began
To say: "His body does not seem to be
Fictitious." Then toward me came certain ones
So far as possible, ever with care
Not to come forth where they would not be burned.
"O thou who goest in the others' train,
Not for thy sloth, but reverent perchance,
Answer thou me who burn in thirst and fire;
Nor is it I alone need thy reply;
All these thirst more for it than Indian
Or Ethiop for water that is cold.
Pray, tell us how it is that thou canst make
Thyself a wall against the sun, as if
Thou hadst not yet entered the net of death."

Thus one of them addressed me, and I then
  Should have declared myself, had I not been
  Intent on something strange that then appeared;
For in the middle of the burning road
  Came on with faces opposite to these
  A folk that made me wonder in suspense.
On either side I see each shade make haste,
  And one will to another give a kiss
  And tarry not, content with brief caress;
Thus with the brown troop of the ants will one
  Touch muzzle with another, if perchance
  They may espy their fortune or their way.
Soon as they end this friendly welcoming,
  Before the first step hastens further on,
  Each group endeavors to outcry the other;
The new folk "Sodom and Gomorra!" shout,
  The other "That the bull may haste to meet
  Her lust, Pasiphaë enters the cow."
Then like the cranes, as if some sought in flight
  Riphaean mountains, and some sought the sands,
  These fearful of the cold, and those of sun,
The one folk goes away, the other comes,
  And they return in tears to their first songs,
  And to the cry that most befits their plight;
The very ones who had besought me, came
  Close to my side as they had done before,
  And, by their looks, intent on listening.
I, who had twice observed what they desired,
  Began to speak: "O souls, assured to have,
  Whenever it may be, a state of peace,
Neither unripe nor yet mature my limbs
  Were not left yonder, but are here with me
  Together with their blood and with their joints.
I go hence upward to be blind no more;

On high a Lady wins us grace, whereby
I bring my mortal body through your world.
So may your greatest longing be appeased,
And thus the heaven that is full of love
And is most ample, soon become your home,
Tell me, that I may trace it yet upon
My paper, who ye are, and what that throng
May be, that goes its way behind your backs?"
Not otherwise confused the mountaineer
Is troubled, and with gazing round is dumb,
When rough and savage he comes into town,
Than was each shade in its appearance then;
But when they were relieved of wondering,
Which is soon quieted in lofty hearts,
"Blessed art thou, that for a better life,"
That one began who first had questioned me,
"Ladest thy ship with knowledge of our land.
The folk that comes not with us did offence
In that for which once Caesar, triumphing,
Heard people crying out against him 'Queen!'
Therefore these cry out 'Sodom!' when they leave,
As thou hast heard them, in their own reproof,
Thus adding to the burning by their shame.
Our sinning was hermaphrodite; and since
We kept not in the bounds of human law,
But followed like the beasts our appetite,
To our opprobrium we all repeat,
Whene'er we separate, her name, who made
Herself a brute within the brute-like frame.
Thou knowest now our deeds, and what our guilt;
If thou perchance wouldst know what are our names,
Time fails to tell, nor could I; but indeed
I will make void thy wish to know of me;
For I am Guido Guinizelli; now

I purge myself, for full repentance came
Before my death." What in Lycurgus' grief
To see their mother her two sons became,
Such I became, but rose not to such height,
When I heard then my father tell his name,
Father of others better than myself,
Who e'er made sweet and graceful rhymes of love;
Then thoughtful I went on, and neither heard
Nor spoke, but long I gazed at him, and yet
I drew no nearer to him for the flames.
When I had fed my eyes with looking long,
I offered to his service all I was,
With affirmation that inspires belief.
And he to me: "Thou leavest such a trace
Within me and so plain, by what I hear,
As Lethe cannot take away, nor dim.
But, if thy words just now swore truth, tell me
What is the reason that thou showest forth
In speech and look that thou dost hold me dear."
And I to him made answer: "Your sweet lays,
Which shall, as long as modern use endures,
Make dear their very characters in ink."
"Brother," said he, "this one whom I pick out,"
(He pointed to a spirit there in front,)
"Was in the mother-tongue a better workman.
All verse of love and all prose of romance
His work excelled; and let the foolish talk,
Who deem his better that one of Limoges.
They look to rumor more than to the truth,
And thus fix their opinion, ere the art
Or reason has been listened to by them.
Many of old treated Guittone thus,
From mouth to mouth crying his praise alone,
Until the truth has conquered him with most.

Now if thou hast such ample privilege, 127
That thou mayst to that cloister go, where Christ
Is Abbot of the college, do thou say
One Paternoster unto Him for me, 130
As far as need is for us of this world,
In which the power to sin is no more ours."
Perchance that he might so give place to one 133
Close by behind, he vanished through the fire,
As when a fish in water seeks the depths.
I went a little forward toward the one 136
That he had pointed out, and said to him,
That for his name my longing had prepared
A gracious place; then willingly he said: 139
"Your courteous request so pleases me,
That I nor can nor will hide me from you;
I am Arnaut, who weep, yet singing go; 142
With grief I see the folly that is past,
And see with joy the hoped-for day before.
Now by that Power that is guiding you 145
Up to the summit of these stairs, I pray
That in due time ye call to mind my pain;"
Then hid himself in the refining fire. 148

CANTO XXVII

As when he first sends forth his quivering rays
There where his Maker shed His blood, meanwhile
The Ebro falling 'neath the lofty Scales,
And Ganges' waters hot with blazing noon, 4
So stood the sun; and day was at its close,
When God's glad Messenger appeared to us,
Outside the flame, and standing on the bank, 7
And singing there: "*Beati mundo corde,*"

With voice that was more living far than ours.
Then: "Holy souls, no one goes farther on,
If first the fire bite not; enter ye this,
And be not deaf to what they sing beyond,"
Said he to us, when we were near to him;
Whereat when I had heard him, I became
Even as one whom men put in the grave.
Above my clasped hands I stretched forward while
I watched the fire, picturing vividly
The human bodies I had e'er seen burned.
Then the good escorts turned about to me,
And Virgil said to me: "My son, in this
It may be there is torment, but not death.
Recall to mind, recall to mind,—if I
Even on Geryon safely guided thee,
What shall I do, now we are nearer God?
Know certainly, that if within the heart
Of these flames thou shouldst stand a thousand years,
They could not rob thee of a single hair;
And if thou think perchance that I deceive,
Move toward them, and gain faith by thine own self
With thine own hands upon thy garments' hem.
Now put away, put all away thy fear;
Turn hither, and come on secure." And yet,
Against my conscience, I stood motionless.
Seeing me motionless, unyielding still,
He said, disturbed a little: "Now, my son,
Thou seest this wall 'twixt thee and Beatrice."
As at the name of Thisbe, Pyramus
Opening his dying eyes, and looked at her,
What time the mulberry became blood-red,
So I, my obduracy softened, turned
To my wise Leader, when I heard the name,
Which in my mind is ever springing up.

Whereat, nodding his head, he said to me: 43
"What? do we mean to stay this side?" then smiled,
As on a child, won over by a fruit.
He entered then the fire in front of me, 46
Asking of Statius to come behind,
Who had for long before divided us.
When I had entered, into boiling glass 49
I could have flung me, to become more cool,
Such was the burning without measure there.
For consolation my sweet Father spoke 52
Only of Beatrice as he went on,
Saying: "E'en now I seem to see her eyes."
A voice we heard beyond was singing now, 55
And guided us; and we, intent alone
On that, came forth upon the upward way.
"*Venite, benedicti Patris mei,*" 58
Sounded within a light, that overcame
My vision so, I could not look thereon.
"The sun sinks down," it added; "evening comes; 61
Tarry not now, but go with eager steps,
While yet there is no darkness in the west."
Straight rose the pathway upward through the rock, 64
Toward such a quarter, that I now cut off
In front of me the rays of the low sun.
Few were the steps of which we made essay 67
Before my sages and myself perceived
By vanished shadows, that the sun had set
Behind us. Ere in its immensity 70
The whole horizon had but one sole hue,
And night was everywhere dispensed abroad,
Each one of us made of a step his bed, 73
Because the nature of the Mount had reft
Our power of ascent and not our will.
As when they ruminate the goats are tame, 76

Which were but now so agile on the heights
And wanton, ere they had been fed, and rest
Quiet in shade, while still the sun is hot,
Watched by the shepherd, who upon his staff
Now leans, and, as he leans, is keeping them;
And as the herdsman in the open fields
Passes the night in quiet by his flock,
And watches lest some wild beast scatter it,
At that time such we were, all three of us,
I, like the goat, and like the shepherds, they,
Hemmed in on either side by lofty rock.
Little of aught outside could there be seen;
But in that little I could see the stars,
Clearer and larger too than is their wont.
Thus ruminating, and admiring these,
A sleep possessed me, sleep that oftentimes
Before the deed has been, has news of it.
It was the hour, I think, when from the east
First strike the mountain Cytherea's rays,
Who ever seems to burn with fire of love;
A lady young and beautiful appeared
To me in dream, who through a meadow went,
Plucking the flowers, and in her song she said:
"Let that one know, who asks my name, that I
Am Leah, and go moving my fair hands
About to make a garland for myself.
I deck me here to please me at my glass;
But from her mirror, where all day she sits,
My sister Rachel never turns away;
Her pleasure is to see her own fair eyes,
As mine to deck myself with my own hands;
Seeing brings her content, as working, me."
And now the splendors of the break of day,
Rising the dearer to the pilgrims' eyes,

As they returning lodge less far from home,
Were making darkness flee on every side,
And with it too my sleep; whence rising, I
Saw the great masters were already risen.
"That pleasant fruit, which mortal men with care
Upon so many branches seek to find,
Shall pacify thy hungerings today."
Such were the words in which then Virgil spoke,
Addressing me, and never were there gifts,
That could have given pleasure like to these.
Such longing upon longing came to me
To be above, that then at every step
I felt my pinions growing for the flight.
When all the stairway underneath our feet
Was hastened over to the topmost step,
On me then Virgil fixed his eyes, and said:
"The fire of time and of eternity
Thou hast beheld, my son, and now art come
Where, of myself, I can no more discern.
Hither with wit I brought thee, and with art;
Henceforth take thine own pleasure for thy guide;
From the steep ways thou 'rt free, and from the strait.
See there the sun that shines upon thy brow,
See the young grass, the flowers, and the shrubs,
Which here the ground produces of itself.
Until the fair eyes shall have come with joy,
That with their tears caused me to come to thee,
Thou canst be seated, and canst walk 'midst these.
Await no more my words, nor sign from me,
For free, upright, and sound thy judgment is;
'Twere wrong to disobey its will, and hence
Over thyself I crown and mitre thee."

CANTO XXVIII

Now eager to search through and round about
The wood divine of dense and living growth,
Which tempered the new daylight to my eyes,
Without awaiting more I left the bank,
And entered on the plain with slowest steps,
Where on all sides the ground breathed fragrance forth.
A sweet breeze, that within itself had naught
Of veering change, was blowing on my brow,
With force no greater than a gentle wind,
In which the branches, quickly tremulous,
Were bending all toward the region where
The holy Mountain cast its shadow first;
Yet from their places they swayed not so far,
That in the tree-tops there the little birds
Had ceased to exercise their every art;
But full of joyfulness they sang, and took
The early breezes in the foliage,
Which e'er kept up the burden to their rhymes,
Such as from branch to branch collects itself
Beside the shore of Chiassi through the pines,
When Aeolus lets the Scirocco forth.
Already had my slow steps carried me
So far within the ancient wood, that I
Could no more see where I had entered in;
And lo, my further course a stream cut off,
Which with its little waves toward the left
Bent down the grass that grew forth from its banks.
All waters that are purest on the earth
Would seem to have in them something admixed,
Compared to that, within which naught is hidden,
Although it moves in the brown dusk beneath

The shadow there perpetual, which lets
The rays of sun or moon ne'er enter in.
My feet stood still, but with my eyes I passed
Beyond the little stream, to gaze upon
The fresh May-blossoms there of many hues;
And then appeared to me, as will appear
A thing which on a sudden turns away
All other thoughts for very wondering,
A solitary lady, who walked there
Singing, and culling from among the flowers,
Which painted all her pathway. Then I said:
"O Lady fair, who in the rays of love
Dost warm thyself, if I may trust to looks
Which are the heart's accustomed witnesses,
I pray that it may come within thy will
Now to draw forward toward this stream so far
That I may understand what thou dost sing.
Thou makest me remember where and what
Proserpina was at the season when
Her mother lost her, and she lost the spring."
And as a lady, who is dancing, turns
With feet together and close to the ground,
And one before another scarcely puts,
Upon the red and yellow flowerets
She turned toward me, not otherwise than would
A virgin, lowering her modest eyes;
And made my prayers content, for she approached
So near that the sweet sound could come to me
Together with the meanings of her song.
As soon as she was where the grasses are
Just bathed by waves of that fair stream, she raised
Her eyes upon me, as a gracious boon.
I do not think so great a light shone out
Beneath the lids of Venus, when her son

Wholly against his wont had pierced them through.
Smiling, upon the right bank opposite,
She went on plucking with her hands more flowers,
Which the high land produces without seed.
Three steps alone the stream kept us apart;
But Hellespont, where Xerxes crossed, which still
Puts curb on all the haughtiness of man,
Surging 'twixt Sestos' and Abydos' shores
Was not more hated in Leander's heart,
Than this by me, because it parted not.
"Ye are new come; perhaps because I here,"
Thus she began, "am smiling in this place
Chosen to be the nest of human kind,
Some questioning may keep you in suspense;
But the psalm *Delectasti* gives you light,
Which can dispel the clouds of intellect.
But thou in front, who wast beseeching me,
Say if thou wouldst hear more; for I have come
Ready to satisfy all thy requests."
"The water and the sound within the wood,"
I said, "combat in me a new belief
In something I have heard opposed to this."
Whence she replied: "I will relate how that,
Which makes thee wonder, springs from its own cause,
And purge away the cloud that falls on thee.
The highest Good, pleasing Itself alone,
Made man both good, and for good, and gave him
This place as earnest of eternal peace.
Through his default his dwelling here was brief;
Through his default, to tears and laboring
He changed his honest laughter and sweet play.
That the disturbance, which below is made
By exhalations from the water and earth,
Which, as they may, follow the train of heat,

Should not break forth in any war on man,
  This Mountain rose so far toward the heavens;
  And is free from them, upward from the gate.
Now, since in circuit the whole air revolves
  With primal revolution from above,
  Unless its round be broken at some part,
Upon this height, which stands out wholly free
  In living air, this motion strikes, and makes
  The wood, for it is dense, give forth the sound;
And then the smitten plant has such a power,
  That with its virtue it fills all the air,
  Which in its turning scatters it around;
The rest of earth, according as itself
  Or its own sky has made it fit, conceives
  And brings forth divers trees of divers powers.
When ye hear this, it should no more appear
  A marvel on the earth, that any plant
  Should there take root without apparent seed.
And thou shalt know that all the holy plain
  Where thou art now, is full of every seed,
  And has such fruit as yonder is not plucked.
The water that thou seest has no vein
  Restored by vapor from the cold condensed,
  As streams that draw and lose again their breath;
But issues from a fountain, constant, sure,
  Which ever takes from God's own will, as much
  As it pours freely out on either side;
On this side is descending with a power
  That takes away man's memory of sin;
  On that side gives it back, of all good deeds.
On this side Lethe is its name, while there
  'Tis called Eunoë, and works not until
  Its waters have been tasted there and here;
And all the other savors this excels;

And though thy thirst might yet be wholly quenched,
Even should I reveal no more to thee,
I add, in grace, a corollary too;
Nor think I that my words will be less dear,
If they go further than I promised thee.
Those who in ancient times have sung the Age
Of Gold and its estate of bliss, perchance
Upon Parnassus dreamed of scenes like these.
The root of mankind here was innocent;
Here Spring eternal, and here every fruit;
This is the nectar, of which each one speaks."
Then turned I wholly backward to behold
My Poets, and I saw that with a smile
They had been listening to her last words;
To the fair Lady then I turned my eyes.

CANTO XXIX

When thus her words were ended, she went on
Singing like one who is inspired with love:
"Beati, quorum tecta sunt peccata."
And like the nymphs, who go along alone
Through forest shades, and one of them desires
To see the sun, and one would flee his light,
Then she advanced stream upward, following
The bank, and I with equal pace abreast,
Her little steps with little answering.
There were not of her steps and mine as yet
A hundred, when both banks so turned that I
Was facing now again toward the east.
Nor was our way in that direction long
Before the Lady turned full round to me,
Saying: "My brother, look and listen!" Lo,

A sudden lustre ran on every side
Through the great forest, and awoke the thought
That there had been a lightning-flash, perchance.
Yet, as the lightning stays but as it comes,
And this, remaining, shone out more and more,
I said within my mind: "What thing is this?"
And a sweet melody was running through
The gleaming air; whereon a righteous zeal
Made me reprove the hardihood of Eve,
Who, when the heaven and the earth obeyed,
The only woman, and but just now formed,
Endured not to remain 'neath any veil;
Beneath which, if she had but been devout,
All these ineffable delights ere this
I should have known, and for a longer time.
While I went on amid such great first-fruits
Of the eternal pleasure, all enrapt,
And still in eagerness for further joys,
'Neath the great branches there in front of us
The air became as 'twere a flaming fire,
And the sweet sound was heard to be a song.
Most holy Virgins, if I ever bore
Hunger or cold or fasting for your sake,
Occasion spurs me to claim their reward.
Now Helicon must needs pour forth for me,
And with her choir Urania give aid
To put in verse things difficult to think.
A little further on, through the long tract
Of middle space between ourselves and them,
Appeared delusively seven trees of gold;
But when I once had come so near to them,
That common qualities, which cheat the sense,
Lost not by distance their especial form,
The power that brings matter for our thought

Distinguished now that they were candlesticks,
And heard the cry "Hosanna!" in their song.
Above, the pageant beautiful flamed forth
Far brighter than the moon in the clear sky
At midnight in the middle of her month.
With mind all full of wonder I turned round
To the good Virgil, and he answered me
With look in which amazement shone no less.
Then turned I back my gaze to the high things,
Which moved so slowly as they came toward us,
New-wedded brides would have outstripped them quite.
The Lady cried: "Why art thou glowing thus
At the sole aspect of the living lights,
And lookest not at that which follows them?"
Then I saw people, following after those
Who seemed to be their leaders, clad in white,
Such whiteness as was never yet on earth.
The water was resplendent at my left,
And like a mirror gave me back again,
If I looked into it, my own left side.
When I had such a place upon my bank,
That the stream only separated me,
That I might better see, I stayed my steps;
Then I beheld the little flames advance,
Leaving behind them trails of painted air,
And seem like pennons streaming on the wind;
So that the air was parted over them
In seven bands, of every hue like those
Of Delia's girdle and the sun-made bow.
These banners were extending rearward far
Beyond my power to see, and, as I think,
The outermost were then ten steps apart.
Under so fair a sky as I describe
Came four and twenty elders, two by two,

And each of them was crowned with flower-de-luce;
And they all sang: "Blessed art thou among
The daughters born of Adam; blessed be
Thy beauties unto all eternity!"
After the flowers and the fresh herbage else,
Opposite me upon the other bank,
No longer had with them that folk elect,
Even as light succeeds to light in heaven,
Four living creatures followed after them,
And with green leaves each one of them was crowned.
And every one was feathered with six wings,
The feathers full of eyes, and such would be
The eyes of Argus, were they still alive.
To tell thee, reader, of their forms, no more
I lavish rhymes; other expense constrains
Me so, I cannot here be prodigal.
But read Ezechiel, who paints them so
As from the region of the cold he saw
Them coming with the wind, and cloud, and fire;
And as thou findest them upon his page,
E'en such were these, except that for the wings
John is with me, and separates from him.
The space that was between these four contained
A chariot triumphal, on two wheels,
Which by a Griffon's neck was drawn along.
It lifted upward both its wings between
The middle band and three on either side,
So that he did none harm by cleaving it.
So high they rose, that they were out of sight;
His members were of gold, as far as he
Was like a bird, and others red and white.
Never did Africanus give Rome joy,
Nor e'en Augustus, with a car so fair;
The chariot of the sun were poor to that,

That of the sun, which straying was consumed,
When Earth had offered up her prayer devout,
And Jove was in his secret counsel just.
Beside the right wheel in a circle danced
Three ladies; and, so ruddy one of them,
She would be hardly seen within the fire.
The other was as if her flesh and bone
Had been of emerald; the third one was
Like the new-fallen snow to look upon.
And they seemed led along now by the white,
Now by the ruddy, and from this one's song
The others took their movements, slow and swift.
Beside the left wheel four made holiday,
All clad in purple, following the mode
Of one of them, in whose head were three eyes.
The next in order to this group described
Were two old men, unlike in garb, but like
In their demeanor, dignified and grave;
One showed himself as of the family
Of that supreme Hippocrates, whom Nature
Made for the creatures that she holds most dear;
The other showed a care the contrary,
Bearing a sword so glittering and sharp,
Even this side the stream it made me fear.
Next I saw four of humble outward mien;
Behind them all was an old man, alone,
Coming in sleep, and of a visage keen.
And like to those of the first company
These seven were habited; but round their heads
They had not of the lilies made their wreath,
Rather of roses, and of other flowers
All red; the eyes not far away had sworn
That all were in a flame above their brows.
And when the car was opposite to me,

It thundered; and these worthy people seemed
To be forbidden further to advance,
And with the ensigns at the front stopped there. 154

CANTO XXX

When the Septentrion of the primal heaven,—
Which neither rise nor setting ever knew,
Nor veil of other cloud than that of sin,
And which was making here each one aware 4
Of his own duty, as the lower makes
Him know, who turns the helm to gain the port,—
Had come to rest, the truthful folk, who had 7
First come between it and the Griffon, turned
Toward the car, as to their peace; and one
Among them, as a messenger from heaven, 10
Sang "*Veni, sponsa, de Libano!*" thrice,
Crying aloud, and after him the rest.
And like the blessed dead at the last trump 13
Rising in readiness, each from his tomb,
And voicing Alleluias, newly clad,
A hundred such upon this car divine 16
Were rising now *ad vocem tanti senis,*
Ministering servants of eternal life,
All saying: "*Benedictus, qui venis!*" 19
And, strewing flowers above them and around,
"*Manibus o date lilia plenis!*"
Ere now at the beginning of the day 22
All rosy have I seen the eastern sky,
The heavens elsewhere beautifully clear,
And then the sun would rise with shaded face, 25
His light so tempered by the vaporous air,
That human eyes could look upon it long;
So it was there within a cloud of flowers, 28

Which then was rising from angelic hands,
And falling back again, within, without,
Appeared to me a Lady, olive-crowned
Over a veil pure white, with mantle green,
And robed in color of the vivid flame.
My spirit, though the time had been so long
Since in her presence it had felt the awe,
Which made it tremble and had broken it,
Without the further knowledge of the eyes,
By hidden virtue, which came forth from her,
Felt the great power of the olden love.
Soon as my vision had been smitten thus
By that high virtue which had pierced me through
Ere yet I was beyond my boyhood's time,
I turned me to the left, in the same trust
With which a child runs to its mother's side,
When fear has come upon it or distress,
To say to Virgil: "Not a single dram
Of blood is left in me that trembles not;
I know the tokens of the love of old."
But Virgil had abandoned us, left now
Without him, Virgil, sweetest Father mine,
Virgil, to whom for my salvation, I
Had given myself; and then of no avail
Was all our Ancient Mother lost, to keep
My cheeks, that dew had cleansed, from darkening tears.
"Dante, though Virgil go away, not yet
Let thy tears fall, let thy tears fall not yet,
For by another sword thy tears must fall."
And as an admiral goes forward now
And now goes aft, to see the men who serve
On other ships, and cheers them to do well,
So there upon the car at its left edge,
When I had turned at hearing called my name,

Which by necessity is here set down,
I saw the Lady, who had first appeared
Beneath the veil of the angelic greeting,
Direct her eyes toward me this side the stream.
Although the veil, which fell down from her head,
And was encircled with Minerva's leaves,
Allowed not that her form be manifest,
Queen-like, and in her bearing haughty still
She then went on, like one who speaks and yet
Is holding back the warmest of his words:
"Look at me well; I am indeed, indeed
Am Beatrice. How deignedst thou approach
The Mount? Didst not know man is happy here?"
I drooped my eyes to the clear fount, but when
I saw myself in it, they sought the grass,
My brow was heavy with such weight of shame.
For as a mother to her son seems proud,
So seemed she then to me; because the taste
Finds bitterness in pity that is stern.
She kept her silence; and then suddenly
The Angels sang forth: "*In te, Domine,*
Speravi," and with "*pedes meos*" closed.
And as the snow among the living rafters
Along the back of Italy congeals,
Blown down and packed by the Slavonian winds,
And when 'tis melted trickles through itself,
If but the land that lacks the shadows, breathe,
So that it seems as candle-melting fire;
Such was I there without a tear or sigh
Before the song of those, that ever sing
After the notes of the eternal spheres;
But when I heard in the sweet harmonies
Compassion for myself, more than if they
Had said: "Lady, why put him thus to shame?"

The ice, that held my heart so tightly clasped, 97
Became as breath and water, and through mouth
And eyes, with anguish issued from my breast.
Still at the mentioned side upon the car 100
She stood, nor moved as she at length addressed
Her words unto the pious beings thus:
"Ye keep your vigils in the eternal day, 103
So that nor night nor sleep can steal from you
A step which Earth may take upon her ways;
Wherefore my answer is with greater care, 106
That he may understand who yonder weeps,
So that his grief may be as was his fault.
Not only by the work of mighty spheres, 109
Which turn to some allotted end each seed
According as the stars companion it,
But by a bounty of God's gracious gifts, 112
Which have such lofty vapors for their rain,
That sight like ours may not attain to them,
This one in his new life potentially 115
Was such, that every upright tendency
Would have wrought out in him a wondrous proof;
But so much more malign and wild becomes 118
The ground with evil seed, or left untilled,
As it has greater vigor in the soil.
Some time did I sustain him with my face, 121
For as I showed to him my youthful eyes
I led him with me, turned to what is right.
Upon the threshold of my second age 124
As soon as I was standing, and changed life,
He gave himself to others, leaving me.
When I from flesh to spirit had arisen, 127
My beauty and my virtue both increased,
I was less pleasing and less dear to him;
He turned his steps to ways not of the truth, 130

And followed the false images of good,
Which keep no promise wholly that they make.
To pray for inspirations helped me not,
With which in dream and otherwise I called
Him back to me, so slight his care for them.
So low he fell that all expedients
For his salvation proved already short,
Except to show him those who have been lost.
So to the portal of the dead I went,
And unto him, who led him to this height,
I poured my supplications forth with tears.
The high decree of God were set at naught,
If Lethe should be passed, and such a viand
Were tasted by him without any scot
Of penitence made manifest in tears."

CANTO XXXI

"O THOU who art beyond the sacred stream,"
Turning to me the point of her discourse,
Which even with the edge seemed keen to me,
As she began again without delay,
"Say, say, if this is true; to such a charge
Thine own confession must needs be conjoined."
My powers were confused to such degree,
That, though my voice moved, it was quenched before
The organs making it could set it free.
Pausing a little, then she said: "What think'st thou?
Reply to me; for the sad memories
The water has not yet destroyed in thee."
My fear and my confusion both combined
In forcing such a "Yes" from out my mouth,
That one had needed eyes to make it out.

And as a cross-bow breaks both string and bow
When it discharges with a strain too great,
And with less force the arrow hits the mark;
E'en so beneath that heavy load I burst
As I poured forth my flooding tears and sighs
With voice that slackened in its issuing.
Wherefore she said: "Within desires of mine,
Which were conducting thee to love that Good,
Beyond which there is naught to be aspired to,
What pits across thy path, or yet what chains
Didst thou encounter, that thou shouldst divest
Thyself of hope of passing further on?
And what allurements, or what benefits
Upon the brows of others were displayed,
That thou shouldst wander in pursuit of them?"
After the drawing of a bitter sigh,
Scarcely had I a voice for answering,
Such labor had my lips in forming it.
Weeping I said to her: "The present things
With their false pleasure turned my steps away,
Soon as your face was hidden from my sight."
And she: "Hadst thou been silent, or denied
That which thou dost confess, thy fault would not
Be known the less, by such a Judge it is known.
But when the accusation of the sin
Bursts forth from one's own mouth, then in our court
The wheel turns itself back against the edge.
But yet, in order that thou mayst now bear
Shame for thy error, and another time,
Hearing the Sirens, thou mayst have more strength,
Put by the sowing of thy tears, and listen;
Thus shalt thou hear how, once my flesh entombed,
Thou shouldst have turned thy steps just opposite.
Never did Nature offer thee, nor Art,

Pleasure so great as the fair limbs in which
I was enclosed, and which are strewn in earth;
And if the highest pleasure failed thee so
Upon my death, what mortal thing was there
That should have drawn thee then to its desire?
Truly thou shouldst, at the first arrow-shot
Of things fallacious, then have risen up
And followed me, who was no longer such.
And there should not have weighted down thy wings,
Awaiting further blows, a damsel young,
Or other vanity of so brief use.
E'en two or three the young bird will await,
But in the sight of those full-fledged, in vain
Is the net spread, and is the arrow shot."
Even as children in their shame stand dumb
And listening, with eyes fixed on the ground,
Repentantly acknowledging their guilt,
Such, standing there, was I; and then she said:
"Since hearing grieves thee, lift thou up thy beard,
And thou shalt feel a greater pain by sight."
With less resistance would a sturdy oak
Tear up its roots before a wind of ours,
Or one that blows from off Iarbas' land,
Than I raised up my chin at her behest;
And when she named my beard instead of eyes,
I knew the venom of her argument.
And when my face was openly upraised,
My sight perceived that from their scattering
Of flowers those primal creatures now had ceased;
My eyes, as yet with little confidence,
Saw Beatrice turned toward the animal,
Which, with two natures, is in person one.
Beyond the stream under her veil she seemed
Surpassing even more her ancient self,

Than she had all the others when with us.
The nettle of repentance stung me so,
That of all other things, what most had drawn
Me to its love, became most hated now.
Such knowledge of myself had pierced my heart,
That overwhelmed I fell; what I became
Is known to her who was the cause of it.
Then, when my heart restored my outward power,
The Lady whom I came upon alone
I saw above me, saying: "Hold to me, hold to me!"
For she had drawn me to the stream, that now
Had reached my throat, and dragging me, she went
Over the water like a shuttle, light.
When I was near the blessed bank, I heard
"*Asperges me*" so sweetly, memory
Can not contain it, and far less my verse.
When the fair Lady, opening her arms,
Had clasped my head, she caused it to submerge
Till of the water I was forced to drink;
She took me thence, presenting me thus bathed
Within the dance of the four beautiful,
And over me each one held out her arm.
"Here we are nymphs, but in the heaven stars;
Ere Beatrice descended to the world
Were we ordained for handmaids unto her.
We lead thee to her eyes, but, for the light
Of joy within them, three that are beyond,
Whose gaze is deeper still, shall sharpen thine."
Thus saying they began; and afterward
They led me with them to the Griffon's breast,
Where Beatrice was standing, turned toward us.
They said: "See that thou do not spare thine eyes,
For thou art placed before those emeralds,
Whence Love once drew those weapons aimed at thee."

A thousand longings hotter than the flame
Held fast my eyes upon the gleaming eyes,
Which were upon the Griffon fixed alone.
As in a glass the sun, not otherwise
The two-fold animal shone there within,
Now with the one, now with the other power.
Think, reader, if I deemed it marvelous,
When I beheld the thing itself at rest,
And in its image ever varying.
While full of awe and happiness, my soul
Was tasting of the food, which of itself
Quenching the thirst, arouses thirst anew,
The other three, who in their bearing showed
Themselves of higher rank, came forward now,
Dancing to their angelic caroling.
"Turn, Beatrice, turn thou thy holy eyes,"
Such was their song, "upon thy faithful one,
Who has, to see thee, taken so many steps;
And of thy grace do us the grace, that thou
Unveil thy mouth to him, that he discern
The second beauty, that thou dost conceal."
O splendor of eternal living light,
Who has become so pallid in the shade
Upon Parnassus, or drunk at its well,
That would not seem to have a clouded mind,
Tried he to render thee as thou didst seem
Beneath the brooding heaven's harmonies,
When thou didst free thyself in that free air?

CANTO XXXII

My eyes had been so fixed and so intent
On satisfaction of their ten years' thirst,
That all my other senses were extinct;

And they themselves had walls on either side
Of unconcern, so with the ancient net
The holy smile drew them unto itself;
When forcibly my gaze was turned about
Toward my left hand by those Goddesses,
Because I heard them say: "Too fixedly!"
And that condition of the eyes for sight
When they have just been smitten by the sun
Made me deprived of vision for a time;
But when the sight re-formed for what was less,
(I say for less, compared with what was more,
From which I had been forced to turn away)
I saw the glorious army now had wheeled
On its right flank, returning, with the sun
And with the seven flames in face of it.
As when a troop will turn to save itself,
Under its shields, and with its banner wheels
Before it can have wholly faced about,
That soldiery of the celestial realm,
Which led the others, had all passed by us
Before its pole had turned the car around.
The ladies then returning to the wheels,
The Griffon drew the blessed burden on,
Yet so, that not a single feather moved.
The fair One, who had drawn me at the ford,
And Statius and myself followed the wheel
Which made its orbit with the lesser arc.
Through the high forest passing, empty now
By fault of her who in the serpent trusted,
Our steps were measured to angelic strains.
In three flights of an arrow from its string
As long a space were covered, as, perchance
We had advanced, when Beatrice came down.
Then "Adam" I heard murmured by them all,

Who formed a circle next, about a plant,
Stripped on each branch of flower and every leaf.
Its crown, which spreads the wider as it mounts,
Would have been wondered at by Indians,
For its great height, if in their forests found.
"Blessed art thou, O Griffon, who with beak
Dost not break down this wood, so sweet to taste,
Because the belly writhes in pain therewith."
When thus had cried, around the sturdy tree,
The others, then the two-fold animal:
"Thus of all righteousness the seed is kept."
And turning to the pole which he had drawn,
He dragged it underneath the widowed tree,
And what had come from it, to it left bound.
As when streams down the great light of the sun,
Commingled with the rays that shine behind
The heavenly Carp, our earthly plants begin
To swell, and each one afterwards takes on
Afresh its coloring, before the sun
Has yoked his steeds beneath another star;
So, showing color less deep than the rose
But more than violet, renewed itself
This plant, which had at first its boughs so bare.
I understood it not, nor here is sung
The hymn which at the time that people sang,
Nor did I hear that music to the end.
Could I portray how the unloving eyes
Drooped slumbering, when Syrinx' tale was told,—
The eyes to which long vigil cost so dear,—
E'en as a painter from his model paints
Would I depict how I then fell asleep;
Who would do that must picture slumber well.
Therefore I pass to when I woke, and say
That splendor rent apart my veil of sleep,

And one who cried: "Arise! what doest thou?"
To see some flowerets of the apple-tree,
Which makes the angels greedy for its fruit,
And makes perpetual marriage-feasts in heaven,
Peter and John and James were led by One,
And being overcome, came to themselves
Hearing what words had broken deeper sleep,
And saw their company had now grown less,
With Moses and Elias no more there,
And changed their Master's raiment, as before;
As such an one, I woke, and saw in pity
One standing over me,—her, who had been
The first to guide my steps along the stream,—
And, all in doubt, said: "Where is Beatrice?"
Then she replied: "Behold her, seated there
Beneath the tree's fresh leaves, upon its root.
Behold the company surrounding her;
The others in the Griffon's train are mounting,
Singing a sweeter song and more profound."
And if she further spoke I know not now,
Because already she was in my sight,
Who had closed up my mind to other thought.
Alone she sat upon the ground itself,
Like one left there as guardian of the car,
Which I had seen the two-fold One bind fast.
Around her in a ring the seven nymphs
Made of themselves a wall, holding those lamps
From Aquilo and Auster both secure.
"A forest-dweller here a little while,
Thou shalt with me for aye be citizen
Of that Rome, where a Roman too is Christ.
To profit then the world of evil life
Fix now thine eyes upon the car, and when
Thou hast returned, write down what thou hast seen."

Thus Beatrice; and I, who at the feet
Of her commands was all devout, gave heed
With mind and eyes, as she made known her will.
Never with such swift motion from dense clouds
Descended fire, when it was coming down
From that confine which stretches most remote,
As I saw then swoop down the Bird of Jove
All through the tree, and tear away the bark
As well as flowers and new foliage;
And smote upon the car with all his might,
Whereon it reeled, as in a storm a ship
Is beaten by the waves on every side;
Then into the body of the vehicle
Triumphal, I saw leaping, a she-fox,
Which seemed as if to fast from all good food;
But, then rebuking her for ugly sins,
My Lady made her turn in such a flight,
As with her fleshless bones was possible.
Then, downward by the way it came at first
I saw the eagle to the chariot's ark
Descend, and leave it feathered from itself.
And as a voice from an afflicted heart,
I heard one come from heaven, saying thus:
"Thou art ill-laden, O my little bark!"
And then it seemed to me the earth had opened
Between the wheels, and forth a dragon came,
Who upward through the chariot thrust his tail;
And like a wasp that draws away its sting,
Now drawing his malignant tail, he drew
The chariot floor in part, and wandered off.
That which remained, like fertile land with grass,
Covered itself anew with feathers given
Perchance with holy and benign intent,
And with them were the pole and both the wheels

New-covered in so short a time, the mouth
Is longer open for one sigh breathed forth.
When thus transformed the holy edifice
Then put forth heads upon its parts, with three
Above the pole and at each corner one.
The first had horns, as oxen; but the four
Had on the forehead but a single horn;
A monster such as this was never seen;
And as a fortress on a mountain height,
Upon this seemed to me to sit secure
A shameless harlot with quick-turning eyes.
As if he would not be deprived of her,
I saw a giant standing at her side,
And they would kiss each other now and then;
But since her lustful, wandering eye had turned
In my direction, that fierce paramour
Had scourged her from her crown unto her feet.
Then full of jealousy and cruel rage,
He loosed the monster, and on through the wood
Dragged this so far, that he with that alone
Screened the strange beast and harlot from my view.

CANTO XXXIII

"*Deus, venerunt gentes,*" group by group,
Now three, now four, the ladies had begun
In tears to sing as a sweet psalmody,
And Beatrice, compassionate, with sighs
Was listening, in aspect such, that more
Had Mary scarcely changed before the cross.
But when the other virgins now gave place
To her to speak, risen she stood upright,
And answered, of a color like to flame:

"*Modicum, et non videbitis me,*
Et iterum, beloved sisters mine,
Modicum, et vos videbitis me."
And then before her she made go the seven,
And by a sign bade follow her myself,
The Lady, and the Sage who had remained.
Thus she was going onward, and I think
Her tenth step was not set upon the ground
When she had smitten mine eyes with her own,
And with a tranquil aspect said to me:
"Come faster so that if I talk with thee,
Thou mayst be better placed for listening."
When, as my duty was, I was by her,
She said: "Brother, why venturest thou not
To question me, now that thou art with me?"
Their lot, who with exceeding reverence
In presence of their betters have to speak,
And bring not to their teeth their words alive,
Was like to mine, when with imperfect speech
Thus I began: "My Lady, all my need
You know, and what is good for it." Then she:
"From fear as well as shame it is my will
That thou henceforward disengage thyself,
So that thou speak no more like one who dreams.
Know that the vessel which the serpent broke
Was and is not; but let him think, who bears
The blame of it, God's vengeance fears not sops.
Not for all time shall be without an heir
The eagle who gave feathers to the car,
By which it first grew monstrous, then a prey;
For I see certainly, and therefore tell,
A time is granted us, by stars now near
Free from all hindrance and impediment,
When a five hundred, ten and five sent down

By God, shall slay, with her who has usurped,
The giant who is sharer in her sin.
If thou be less persuaded by my words,
Obscure as those of Themis or the Sphinx,
Because like theirs they cloud the intellect,
The facts shall soon become the Naiades
And solve this hard enigma without harm
Either to flocks or to the growing grain.
Do thou take note; and, as I utter them,
See that thou mark these words for those who live
The life that is a running unto death;
And keep in mind, when thou dost write them down,
Not to conceal how thou hast seen the plant
Which here has been despoiled a second time;
For whosoever breaks or plunders it
With blasphemy of deed does God offence,
Who made it holy for His use alone.
For biting it, in pain and in desire
Five thousand years and more the first soul longed
For Him, who punished in Himself the bite.
Thy wit is sleeping, if it fail to judge
That for especial cause it rises up
To such great height with its inverted top.
And if it had not been for the vain thoughts
Like Elsa's water round about thy mind,
And if their joy were not a Pyramus
To the mulberry, thou wouldst have morally,
Through incidents so manifold alone,
Seen God was just, by the forbidden tree.
But, as I see thee in thine intellect
Made as of stone, and, stony, darkened so,
The light of what I say is dazzling thee,
I also will that thou shouldst bear it hence,
If not in words, yet painted in thy mind,

Even as pilgrims bring the palm-wreathed staff."
And then I said: "Like wax beneath the seal,
That changes not the figure pressed on it,
My brain has now received its stamp from you.
But why so high above my vision soar
Your words, that I so long for, and my eyes
But lose the more, the more they strive for them?"
"That thou mayst come to know," she said, "that school
Which thou hast followed, and mayst see how far
Its teaching has the power to follow me,
And see your ways are separate as far
From those of God, as is the earth below
From the swift heaven that is placed most high."
Whereon I answered: "I remember not
That ever I estranged myself from you,
Nor am I conscious of remorse for it."
"And if thou canst not bring it to thy mind,"
She answered with a smile, "remember now
It was this very day that thou didst drink
Of Lethe; and, if fire is proved by smoke,
This thy forgetfulness makes evident
That fault was in thy will, elsewhere intent.
And verily henceforth my words shall be
Naked to thee, as far as shall befit
That I uncover them to thy rude sight."
And now more flashing and with slower steps
The sun had reached the noon-day circle's height,—
With the beholder changing here and there,—
When, like the one who goes ahead as guide
And stops, if he find any novelty,
Or trace of one, the seven ladies stopped
Beside the margin of a shadow, pale
As that which 'neath green leaves and boughs of black
The cold streams have above them in the Alps.

In front of them Euphrates seemed to me
To rise with Tigris from a single spring,
And then part company, like lingering friends.
"O Light, O Glory of the human race,
What water is it, that is here poured forth
From one beginning, and divides itself?"
To such a prayer was answered me: "Beseech
Matilda, that she tell it thee;" and then
Replied, as one who frees herself from blame,
The Lady beautiful: "This thing and others
I have made known to him, and I am sure
That Lethe's water hid them not from him."
And Beatrice: "Perhaps a greater care,
Which oftentimes bereaves of memory,
Has made the vision of his mind grow dim.
But yonder see Eunoë flowing down;
Lead him to it, and there, as is thy wont,
Quicken anew in him his swooning power."
And as a gentle soul makes no excuse,
But lets another's will become her own,
As soon as it is outwardly disclosed,
So then the Fair One took me by the hand,
And, moving onward, said to Statius,
In manner as a lady: "Come with him!"
If I had, reader, longer space to write,
I would at least in part sing the sweet draught,
Which never would have left me satisfied;
But inasmuch as all the leaves are full
That for this second canticle were planned,
The curb of art lets me go on no further.
I came again from that most holy wave
So made anew, even as plants are fresh
With the fresh life of their fresh foliage,
Pure and disposed to mount unto the stars.

PARADISO

PARADISO

CANTO I

THE glory of the One who moves all things
Penetrates through the universe, resplendent
In one part more and in another less.
I have been in the heaven which receives
Most of His light; and seen things, which whoso
Descends from there above neither knows how
Nor has the power to tell; for, drawing near
Its own desire, our intellect goes in
So deeply, memory can not follow it.
Howbeit, whatever of the holy realm
I had the power to treasure in my mind,
That shall be now the matter of my song.
O good Apollo, for this final labor
Make of me such a vessel of thy worth
As thou wouldst have for the loved laurel gift.
Thus far one summit of Parnassus was
Enough for me, but now with both I need
To enter the arena that remains.
Enter this breast of mine, and do thou breathe
In such wise as when thou from out the sheath
Of his limbs drewest Marsyas. O Power
Divine, if thou so lend thyself to me
That I the shadow of the blessed realm
Imprinted in my head make manifest,
Thou shalt see me come to thy chosen tree

And crown myself there with those leaves, of which
The matter and thyself shall make me worthy.
So rarely, Father, do men gather them
For triumph or of Caesar or of poet,—
A fault, and to the shame of human wills,—
That the Peneian leaf should bring forth joy
Within the joyous Delphic deity,
When it gives man a longing for itself.
A great flame follows up a little spark;
Perhaps with better voices after me
Prayer shall be made, for Cyrrha to respond.
The world's lamp rises up to mortals through
Different passages; but from the one
Where with three crosses are four circles joined,
With better course and with a better star
Conjoined it issues, and the mundane wax
Tempers and seals the better in its way.
Such passage was it nearly, that had made
There morning and here evening; and all
That hemisphere was white; the other part
Was black, when I saw Beatrice now turned
To her left side and gazing on the sun;
Eagle ne'er fixed himself upon it so.
And even as a second ray is wont
To issue from the first and remount upward,
Like to a pilgrim wishing to return;
So of her action, through the eyes poured in
To my imagination, mine was made,
And on the sun, beyond our wont, I fixed
My eyes. There much is granted to our powers
Which here is not, in virtue of the place
Made the due habitation of mankind.
Not long could I endure it, nor so briefly
But that I saw it sparkle round about,

Like boiling iron coming from the fire.
And of a sudden day seemed joined to day,
As if the One who has the power had now
Adorned the heaven with another sun.
Beatrice stood with her eyes wholly fixed
On the eternal wheels; and I on her
Had fixed my eyes, removed from there above.
Gazing on her such I became within
As Glaucus when he tasted grass that made
Him consort in the sea of other gods.
Words can not tell how man grows more than man;
May this example then suffice to him
For whom grace hath in store experience.
If I was only what of me thou last
Didst make, O Love that governest the heavens,
Thou knowest, who with Thy light didst lift me up.
When the revolving, which Thou longed-for makest
Eternal, drew my thought unto itself
With harmony accorded and assigned
By Thee, so much of heaven then appeared
Enkindled with the sun's flame, that ne'er rain
Nor river made a lake spread out so wide.
The newness of the sound and the great light
Kindled in me desire to know their cause
With keenness such as I had never felt.
Whence she, who saw me as I see myself,
To put to rest my agitated mind,
Opened her lips ere I did mine to ask;
And she began: "Thy self thou makest dense
With false imagining, so that thou seest
Not what thou wouldst see, hadst thou cast that off.
Thou art not on the earth, as thou believest;
But lightning, flying from its proper site,
Ne'er sped as thou who art returning thither."

If by the brief, fond words she spoke with smiles
I was divested of my first doubt, now
I was the more entangled with a new
Within me, and I said: "Already I
Rested content from wondering much, but now
I wonder how bodies as light as these
I can transcend." Whereon with pitying sigh
She turned her eyes toward me with the look
A mother casts on her delirious child,
And she began: "All things existing have
Order among themselves, and this is form,
Which makes the universe like unto God.
Herein the exalted creatures see the trace
Of the Eternal Worth, which is the end
Whereto the mentioned order is ordained.
Within that order that I indicate
All natures tend to move by diverse lots
As more or less near to their origin;
Wherefore their motion is to diverse ports
O'er the great sea of being, and each one
With instinct given it that bears it on.
This bears away the fire toward the moon;
This is the motive force in mortal hearts;
This binds together and unites the earth.
Not only the created things which lack
Intelligence doth this bow arrow forth,
But those possessing intellect and love.
The Providence ordaining all doth make
With its own light that heaven ever quiet
In which revolves the one of greatest speed.
And now to that as an appointed site
Are we borne by the power of that cord
Which to a joyful mark directs whate'er
It shoots. In truth, as form ofttimes doth not

Accord with the intention of the art,
Because the deaf material answers not:
So from this course the creature will at times
Depart, that has the power, though thus impelled,
To bend away toward another part,—
Even as one may see the fire to fall
Out of a cloud,—if the first impetus,
Wrenched by false pleasure, turn it to the earth.
Thou shouldst not marvel, if I rightly judge,
At thine ascending, more than at a stream
That from high mountain-top flows to the base.
It were a marvel in thee, if, deprived
Of hindrance, thou wert seated down below,
As quiet in living fire would be on earth."
Thereon she turned her face again toward heaven.

CANTO II

O YE, who in a very little bark,
Eager to listen, have been following
Behind my ship that singing makes its way,
Turn back to look again upon your shores;
Put you not out to sea, lest it befall
That, losing me, ye should remain astray.
The water which I take, was never sailed;
Minerva breathes, Apollo is my guide,
And Muses nine point out to me the Bears.
Ye other few who in due time have lifted
Your necks for angels' bread, on which man lives
Below, but never knows satiety,
Ye may well send over the deep, salt sea
Your vessel that doth in my furrow keep
Before the water that grows smooth again.

Those glorious men who went across the sea 16
To Colchis marveled not as ye shall do,
When they saw Jason to a ploughman turned.
The concreated and perpetual thirst 19
For that realm in God's image bore us on
Almost as swift as ye see heaven move.
Beatrice upward gazed, and I on her; 22
And in the time perchance a quarrel takes
To hit and fly and be loosed from the notch,
I saw that I had come where a strange thing 25
Drew to itself my sight; and therefore she,
From whom no working of my mind could hide,
Toward me turned, as glad as beautiful. 28
"Direct thy grateful mind to God," she said,
"Who with the first star has united us."
It seemed to me that there was covering us 31
A lucid, dense, solid and polished cloud,
As it were a diamond smitten by the sun.
Within itself had the eternal pearl 34
Received us, as in water is received
A ray of light, remaining still as one.
If I was body,—and man knows not here 37
How one dimension brooked another, as
Must be if body into body glide,—
The more should the desire enkindle us 40
To see that Essence, in which is beheld
How God and our own nature were made one.
Then shall be seen that which we hold by faith, 43
Not demonstrated, but known of itself,
Like to the primal truth that man believes.
I answered: "Lady, with my utmost power 46
Devoutly do I render thanks to Him,
Who has removed me from the mortal world.
But tell me what the dusky marks upon 49

This body are, which cause men there below
Upon the earth to fable about Cain."
She smiled a little, and then said to me:
"If the opinion held by mortal men
Errs where the key of sense does not unlock,
Surely the shafts of wonder ought not now
To pierce thee; since, the senses leading on,
Thou seest that the reason's wings are short.
But tell me what thou think'st of it thyself."
And I: "What seems to us diverse up here,
I think is caused by bodies rare and dense."
And she: "Thou shalt see surely quite submerged
In error thy belief, if thou heed well
The adverse argument that I shall make.
The eighth sphere shows you many lights, which both
In quality and quantity may be
Observed to be of aspects various.
If rarity and density worked this,
One single virtue would there be in all,
Allotted more or less or equally.
Virtues that are diverse must be the fruits
Of formal principles, and these, save one,
Would by thy reasoning's sequence be destroyed.
Further, if of that duskiness the cause
Were rarity, of which thou askest, then
Either this planet through and through would lack
In part its matter thus; or, as a body
Divides the fat and lean, so would this one
Have in its volume alternating leaves.
Were the first true, it would be manifest
In the eclipses of the sun by light
Then shining through, as when elsewhere it falls
On what is rare. This is not so; hence we
Must view the other, and if I refute

That also, thy opinion is proved false.
If then this rarity does not pass through,
There must needs be a limit, beyond which
Its contrary lets it no further pass,
And thence another body's ray is thrown
Backward, as color turns back through a glass
Which hides behind it lead. Now thou wilt say
That there the ray doth manifest itself
Dimmer than in the other parts, because
It is reflected there from further back.
From this objection can experiment—
The wonted spring of streams of human arts—
Deliver thee, if ever thou essay.
Take thou three mirrors; two remove from thee
An equal distance, and between them let
The other more remote be in thy sight.
Turning toward them, have placed behind thy back
A light that shall the three illuminate,
And striking on them all come back to thee.
Although the further image stretch not out
In quantity so large, thou shalt see there
How it must needs be brilliant equally.
Now, as beneath the strokes of the warm rays,
What underlies the snow is left all bare
Both of the former color and the cold,
Thee, who art left thus in thine intellect,
I would inform with light so full of life
That it shall tremble as thou look'st on it.
Within the heaven of the peace divine
Revolves a body, in whose virtue lies
The being of all that which it contains.
The heaven following, that has so many sights,
Imparts that being to diverse essences
From it distinguished and by it contained;

The other spheres through special difference
  Dispose the powers distinct, within themselves,
  To their own ends and sowing of their seed.
These organs of the universe proceed
  Thus, as thou seest now, from grade to grade,
  For from above they take and downward work.
Pay thou such heed to me, how I proceed
  Through this place to the truth which thou desirest,
  That thou canst later keep the ford alone.
The holy circles' movement and their virtue,
  As from the workman comes the hammer's art,
  Must from the blessed movers be breathed forth;
And from the deep mind turning it, the heaven
  Which with so many lights is beautiful,
  Taking the image, makes thereof a seal.
And as the soul that is within your dust
  Resolves itself through members different
  And unto diverse potencies conformed,
In such a way doth the Intelligence
  Spread through the stars its goodness multiplied,
  Itself revolving on its unity.
Virtue diverse makes a diverse alloy
  With the precious body that it vivifies,
  With which, as life in you, it is bound up.
Because of the glad nature whence it flows
  The mingled virtue through the body shines,
  As through the living eye one's happiness.
From this comes that, which between light and light
  Seems different, not from aught dense or rare;
  This as the formal principle brings forth
In goodness due the turbid and the clear."

CANTO III

THAT sun, which first with love had warmed my breast,
Fair truth's sweet aspect had disclosed to me
By proof and by disproof; and that I might
Confess myself corrected and assured,
As far as was befitting I raised up
My head, to make expression, more erect.
But there appeared a vision, which held me
So closely to itself to look on it,
That my confession I remembered not.
As through transparent, polished glasses, or
Through waters clear and tranquil, not so deep
As that the bottom should be lost to sight,
The outlines of our faces are returned
So faint, that on a brow of white a pearl
Comes to our pupils not less speedily;
Such I saw many a face, eager to speak;
Whence I rushed to a fault counter to that
Which kindled love between the man and spring.
At once, as soon as I had noted them,
Deeming that they were mirrored likenesses,
To see whose they might be I turned my eyes;
And naught I saw; and forward turned them now
Directly to the light of that sweet guide,
Whose holy eyes were glowing as she smiled.
"Wonder not that I smile," she said to me,
"After thy childlike thought, because thy foot
Does not yet trust itself upon the truth,
But turns thee, as it is wont, to vacancy.
Real substances are these which thou dost see,
For vows they kept not, relegated here.
So, speak with them, and hear them, and believe,

For the true light that gives them peace grants not
That from itself they turn aside their feet."
And I turned to the shade that seemed to have 34
Most eagerness to talk, and like a man
Bewildered through too great desire, began:
"O well-created spirit, who in the rays 37
Of life eternal dost the sweetness feel
Which is, untasted, never understood,
It were a gracious act to me, if thou 40
Content me with thy name and with your lot."
Whereon she, promptly and with laughing eyes:
"Our charity locks not the door upon 43
A just wish, any more than that which wills
That all its court should be like to itself.
I was a virgin sister in the world; 46
And if thy memory duly search itself,
Being more beautiful will hide me not
From thee, but thou wilt recognize Piccarda, 49
Who placed here with these other blessèd ones
Am blessèd in the slowest of the spheres.
As our affections are inflamed alone 52
In what is pleasing to the Holy Spirit,
They joy in being formed as He ordains.
And this lot, which seems so far down, is given 55
To us because of our neglected vows,
In some particular left unfulfilled."
Whence I to her: "Your wondrous aspects have 58
A splendor of I know not what divine,
Transmuting you from what I once conceived.
Hence I was tardy in remembering; 61
But what thou tellest me assists me so
That I refigure thee more clearly now.
But yet tell me: ye who are happy here, 64
Do ye desire a more exalted place

That ye may see more, or make you more friends?"
She with those other shades first smiled a little;
After that answered me so joyously,
That she seemed one who burned in love's first fire:
"Brother, virtue of charity doth put
Our will to rest, and make us only wish
For what we have, and thirst for naught beside.
If we desired to have a higher place,
Then our desires would be discordant from
The will of Him who bids us here abide,
Which thou shalt see can not be in these circles,
If life in charity must needs be here,
And if its nature thou consider well.
Nay, it is the essence of this blessed being
To keep itself within the will divine,
By which our wills themselves become as one.
So that as we exist from seat to seat
Throughout this realm, it pleases all the realm
As it does Him, who wills in us His will;
And His will is our peace; it is that sea
Toward which in self-motion are all things,
What He creates, and that which nature does."
It was then clear to me how everywhere
In heaven is Paradise, even though the grace
Of the Chief Good rains not there in one mode.
But as befalls, if one food satisfies
And for another still remains the taste,
That, giving thanks for that, we ask for this:
Even so did I with act and with my words
To learn from her what was the web, in which
She had not drawn the shuttle to the head.
"A perfect life and high desert enheavens
Above," said she, "a Lady in whose rule
Some in your world below are habited

And veiled, that they till death may watch and sleep
With Him, their Spouse, who every vow accepts,
Conformed by love to that which pleases Him.
To follow her I fled the world, a child,
And in her habit I enclosed myself,
And gave my promise to her Order's way.
Then men, accustomed more to ill than good,
From the sweet cloister dragged me forth; and God
Doth know what afterwards my life became.
This other splendor, too, who shows herself
To thee at my right side, and who with all
The light of our sphere is enkindled now,
Knows in herself what of myself I say.
She was a sister, from whose head likewise
The shadow of the sacred veil was taken.
But when she too was turned back to the world,
Her liking and good usage set at naught,
The veil was never loosened from her heart.
This is the light of the great Constance, who
Of the second blast of Swabia conceived
The third, the final power." Thus unto me
She spoke, and thereupon began *Ave*
Maria singing, and still singing passed
From sight, like things of weight through watery depths.
My gaze, which had been following her as long
As it was possible, when it lost her,
Unto the mark of greater longing turned,
Wholly reverting now to Beatrice;
But she flashed forth so brightly as I looked,
That at the first my sight endured it not,
Which made me slower in my questioning.

CANTO IV

BETWEEN two viands, equally far off
And appetizing, one would starve to death
Ere, a free man, he brought one to his teeth.
So would a lamb stand still in equal dread
Between the ravenings of two savage wolves;
So would a dog stand still between two does.
Hence, if I spoke not, I blame not myself,
Urged in an equal measure by my doubts,
Since it was necessary, nor commend.
I spoke not, but depicted on my face
Was my desire, and questioning therewith
More ardent far than if by speech distinct.
So Beatrice did as erst Daniel
When he removed Nebuchadnezzar's wrath
Which caused in him such unjust cruelty,
And said: "I plainly see how thou art drawn
By this and that desire, so that thy care
In such wise binds itself, it breathes not forth.
Thou reasonest: If the good will endures,
Then by what reason can man's violence
Lessen for me the measure of desert?
Besides, a cause of doubt is given thee
In the appearance that the souls return,
As it is taught by Plato, to the stars.
These are the questions that upon thy will
Thrust equally, and therefore I will first
Treat of the one that has the more of gall.
The one most God-like of the Seraphim,
Moses and Samuel and either John
Which thou mayst choose, nay, Mary even, say I,
Have not their seats in other heaven than

Those spirits which just now appeared to thee,
Nor for their being, more or fewer years.
But all make the first circle beautiful,
And variously have sweet life, because
Of feeling more or less the eternal breath.
Here they appeared, not that this sphere has been
Allotted to them, but to signify
The one of heaven of the least ascent.
Thus must your wit be spoken to, because
Only through what is sensed it apprehends
What it then makes worthy of intellect.
On this account the Scripture condescends
To your capacity, and feet and hands
To God attributes, and means otherwise;
And Holy Church in aspect like to men
Gabriel and Michael represents to you,
And him who made Tobias whole again.
That which Timaeus argues of the souls
Is not like this which here is to be seen,
Since it appears that he thinks as he says.
He says the soul returns to its own star
In his belief that it is severed thence
When nature has bestowed it as a form.
But his opinion is of other guise,
Perchance, than his words sound, and it may have
Significance that one may not deride.
If his thought is that to these wheels return
The honor of their influence and blame,
Perchance his bow has hit upon some truth.
This principle, ill-understood, misled
Nearly the whole world formerly, which then
Unduly named Jove, Mercury and Mars.
The other doubt disturbing thee has less
Of venom in it, since its harmfulness

Could not lead thee away from me elsewhere.
That heaven's justice seems to be unjust
In mortal eyes is argument of faith,
Not of heretical iniquity.
But inasmuch as your intelligence
Is well equipped to penetrate this truth,
I will content thee, as thou dost desire.
If it is violence when the one suffering
Contributes naught to that which forces him,
These souls were not excused because of that;
For will, if it wills not, can not be quenched,
But does as nature does in fire, though it
A thousand times be wrenched by violence;
For if it much or little bend itself,
It follows force; and thus did these, while able
Still to return unto the holy place.
If it had been that their will was entire
Such as held Lawrence on his gridiron,
And rendered Mucius stern to his own hand,
It would have driven them back along the road
Whence they were dragged, as soon as they were loosed;
But will of such a firmness is too rare.
And by these words, if thou hast gathered them
As thou shouldst have, that argument is met
Which would have troubled thee yet many times.
But now another pass before thine eyes
Crossing thy way is such, that of thyself
Thou wouldst not issue thence ere thou wert weary.
I have put in thy mind for certain, how
A blessed soul has not the power to lie,
As it is always near the primal truth;
And then thou mightest from Piccarda hear
How Constance kept affection for the veil,
So that she seems to contradict me here.

It has happened, brother, many times ere now
That, to flee peril, one against desire
Has done that which it was not meet to do;
Even as Alcmaeon, whom his father prayed
To do so, slew his mother and became
Devoid of pity to save piety.
Concerning this I wish that thou observe
That force mingles with will, and they effect
That the offences can not be excused.
Absolute will consents not to the wrong,
But yet consents in so far as it fears,
If it draw back, to fall to greater harm.
Hence, when Piccarda utters this, she thinks
Of the will absolute, and I of the other,
So that we both together speak the truth."
Such was the rippling of the holy stream,
Which issued from the Fount whence all truth flows;
And such, it set at rest both my desires.
"O Love of the First Lover," said I then,
"O thou divine one, whose o'erflowing speech
So warms me that it quickens more and more,
My own affection is not of a depth
Sufficing to repay you grace for grace;
May He, who sees and can, respond for this!
Our intellect is never satisfied,
I plainly see, unless truth be its light,
Outside of which there is no truth extends.
It rests therein, as in his lair a beast,
As soon as it is reached; and it can reach it;
If not, then each desire would be in vain.
On this account there springs up like a shoot,
Doubt at the foot of truth, and nature it is
That drives us summit-ward from height to height.
To me this gives assurance; this bids me,

Lady, with reverence to question you
Of other truth that is obscure to me.
I fain would know if man for broken vows
Can satisfy you so with other goods
That shall not in your scales be light of weight."
Beatrice looked upon me with her eyes
Full of the sparks of love and so divine,
That overcome, my power turned its back,
And I was lost, as it were, with eyes downcast.

CANTO V

"If I flame on thee in the heat of love
Beyond the measure that on earth is seen
And vanquish so the valor of thine eyes,
Marvel thou not thereat; for this proceeds
From perfect sight, which as it apprehends
So moves its foot to the apprehended good.
I plainly see how in thine intellect
There shines already the eternal light
Which, only seen, always enkindles love;
If any other thing seduce your love,
It is naught but some vestige of that light
Ill understood, that is there shining through.
Thou wouldst know whether for a vow not kept
With other service so much may be done
As shall secure the soul from lawful suit."
In such wise Beatrice began this chant;
And as a man who breaks not off his speech,
Continued thus the holy reasoning:
"The greatest gift which in His bounty God
Made at creation, and the most conformed
To His own goodness, and which He Himself

Most prizes, was the freedom of the will, 22
Wherewith the creatures with intelligence
All, and they only, were and are endowed.
Now will appear to thee, if thou conclude 25
From this, the high worth of the vow, if such
That God consent when thou consentest; for
In making compact between God and man, 28
Out of this treasure, such as I have named,
Is made a victim, and by its own act.
As compensation what then can be rendered? 31
Thinkest thou to use well what thou hast offered,
Thou wouldst do good work with ill-gotten gain.
Thou art now clear as to the greater point; 34
But because Holy Church exempts in this,
Which seems against the truth I have disclosed,
Thou must still sit a while at table, for 37
The solid food which thou hast taken calls
For further aid to thee, digesting it.
Open thy mind to that which I reveal 40
To thee, and close it in; for to have heard
And not retained a thing is not to know.
In the essence of this sacrifice two things 43
Are in agreement: one is that of which
It is made, the other the agreement's self.
This last can never be annulled, except 46
By being kept; and bearing upon this
That which was said before is so precise;
Hence for the Hebrews the necessity 49
But to make offering; although some thing
Thus offered might be changed, as thou must know.
The former, shown then as material, 52
May well be such, that one errs not, if one
Put in its place other material.
But let no one at his own judgment shift 55

The load his shoulder bears without the turning
Both of the white, and of the yellow key;
And let him hold as foolish every change,
Unless the thing laid down be not contained
In the one taken up, as four in six.
Hence whatsoever thing that weighs so much
That by its worth it bears down every scale,
Can with no other outlay be redeemed.
Let mortals take no vow in trifling mood;
Be faithful; not perverse in doing so,
As Jephthah was in his first offering,
Who would have better said: 'I have done ill,'
Than in the keeping of the vow do worse;
As foolish wilt thou find the Greeks' great leader,
Wherefore Iphigenia wept, that she
Was fair of face, and caused to weep for her
Wise men and fools who heard of such a rite.
Be ye more grave in moving, Christians;
Be ye not as a feather to each wind,
Nor trust by every water to be washed.
Ye have the Old and the New Testament,
And of the Church the Shepherd is your guide;
For your salvation deem ye this enough.
If evil covetousness cry aught else
To you, be men, not silly sheep, so that
The Jew among you may not laugh at you.
Do not ye act as does the lamb that leaves
Its mother's milk in silly wantonness
To please itself, fighting against itself."
Thus Beatrice to me, as I write down;
Then turned herself in fulness of desire
To where the universe is most alive.
Her ceasing and her changed appearance put
My eager mind to silence, though it had

New questionings already to advance.
And even as the arrow which has found
The mark before the string is still, so we
Into the second kingdom had sped on.
My Lady I beheld so joyous here
When she had entered in this heaven's light,
The very planet grew more bright with it.
And if the star knew such a change, and smiled,
What did I then become, who even by nature
Am so transmutable in every way!
As in a fish-pond which is still and clear,
The fishes move to what comes from without
In such wise that they deem it food for them;
More than a thousand splendors saw I thus
Moving toward us, and in each one of them
Was heard: "Lo, one who shall increase our loves!"
And as each one was coming up to us,
The shade was seen in plenitude of joy
In the clear brightness issuing forth from it.
Think, reader, if that which is here begun,
Should not continue, how thou wouldst then have
An anxious craving to know more; and thou
Wilt of thyself perceive how I desired
To hear what their conditions were from these
As soon as they appeared before my eyes.
"O thou well-born, whom Grace permits to see
The thrones of the eternal triumph ere
Thou hast abandoned the life militant,
The light that through all heaven is spread abroad
Enkindles us; and so, if thou desirest
Enlightenment of us, sate thee at will."
Thus was I spoken to by one among
Those pious spirits; and by Beatrice:
"Speak, speak securely, and trust them as gods."

"Clearly I see how thou dost nest thyself
In thine own light, and drawest it through thine eyes,
Because they sparkle as thou smilest; but
I know not who thou art, nor why thou hast,
O worthy soul, thy grade within this sphere,
Veiled unto mortals with another's rays."
This had I said when turned toward the light
Which first addressed me; whereupon it grew
Brighter by far than it had been before.
Even as the sun, which by excess of light
Conceals itself when once the tempering
Of the dense vapors is consumed by heat;
Through greater joy then hid itself from me
The holy form in its own radiance,
And thus, closely enclosed, it answered me
In manner as the following canto sings.

CANTO VI

"Since Constantine had turned the eagle back,
Counter to heaven's course which it pursued
Behind the ancient who had taken to wife
Lavinia, two hundred years and more
The bird of God remained on Europe's verge,
Near to the mountains whence it first went forth;
And there from hand to hand governed the world
Beneath the shadow of the sacred wings,
And changing thus had come upon my own.
Caesar I was, and am Justinian,
Who, as the Primal Love within me willed,
Drew from the laws what was too much and vain;
And ere I was intent upon the work,
I held one nature was in Christ, not more,

And with such faith I was contented; but
The blessed Agapetus, who was then
The Supreme Pastor, with the words he spoke
Directed me to purity of faith.
Him I believed, and what was in his faith
I see now clearly, even as thou seest
All contradiction to be false and true.
As soon as with the church I moved my feet,
It pleased God to inspire me, of His Grace,
With this high task, to which I wholly gave me,
Entrusting to my Belisarius
My arms, with whom was heaven's right hand so joined,
It was a sign that I myself should rest.
Now here to the first question terminates
My answer; but its nature forces me
To follow it with something further still,
That thou mayst see with how much reason moves
Against the standard that is sacrosanct
Both who assumes and who opposes it;
What virtue makes it merit reverence
Observe." And he began from that time when,
To give to it a kingdom, Pallas died.
"Thou knowest that it made its dwelling-place
In Alba for three hundred years and more,
Till when three against three fought for it still.
Thou knowest, from the Sabine women's wrong
To Lucrece' woe, its deeds, in seven kings,
Subduing neighboring peoples round about.
Thou knowest its deeds, by Roman heroes borne
'Gainst Brennus, against Pyrrhus, and against
The other princes and confederates;
Whereby Torquatus and that Quinctius named
For locks unkempt, Decii and Fabii
Acquired the fame which gladly I embalm.

It brought to earth the Arabs in their pride, 49
Who in the train of Hannibal had passed
The Alpine rocks, from which thou, Po, dost glide.
Under it in their youth did Scipio 52
And Pompey triumph; and unto the hill
Beneath which thou was born, bitter it seemed.
Then, near the time when Heaven wholly willed 55
To bring the world to its own mood serene,
Caesar assumed it by the will of Rome;
And what it did from Var even to Rhine, 58
Isère beheld and Saône, and Seine beheld,
And every valley by which Rhone is filled.
When then it did, Ravenna left behind 61
And Rubicon o'erleaped, was of such flight
That neither tongue nor pen could follow it.
Toward Spain it wheeled the host; afterwards toward 64
Dyrrachium, and smote Pharsalia so
That, on the hot Nile even, men felt the pain.
Antandros and the Simois, whence erst 67
It came, it saw again, and too the place
Where Hector lies; and, ill for Ptolemy,
Then shook itself; thence upon Juba swooped 70
Like lightning; afterwards turned toward your west
Where it had heard the Pompeys' trumpet sound.
What with the ruler following it did 73
Brutus and Cassius attest in hell;
It made Perugia grieve, and Modena.
Because of it sad Cleopatra still 76
Is weeping, who, fleeing in front of it,
Seized from the viper sudden and black death.
With him it sped even to the Red Sea shore; 79
By it the world was so composed in peace,
That upon Janus was his temple closed.
But what the ensign that now makes me speak 82

Had done before and later was to do
Throughout the mortal realm subject to it,
Grows in appearance little and obscure,
If it be viewed in the third Caesar's hand
With eye unclouded and affection pure;
Because the Living Justice which inspires me
Granted to it, in his hand whom I name,
Glory of taking vengeance for its wrath.
Marvel now here at my reply to thee:
It sped with Titus afterwards to take
Vengeance for vengeance of the ancient sin.
And when the Holy Church was bitten by
The Lombard tooth, victorious Charlemagne
Came to her succor underneath its wings.
Now canst thou judge aright of such as those
Whom I accused above, and of their faults,
Which are the cause of all your ills. One lifts
The yellow lilies 'gainst the public standard,
Another claims it for his faction, so
That it is hard to see which errs the more.
Use then the Ghibellines, use they their skill
'Neath other standard! This one follows ill
Ever the man who justice parts from it;
Let this new Charles with his Guelf followers
Not strike it down; but let him fear the talons
That from a loftier lion stripped the fell.
Sons many times already have bewept
A father's fault; and let him not believe
That for his lilies God will change His arms!
This little star embellishes itself
With the good spirits who were active that
Honor and fame might follow after them;
And when, thus deviating, the desires
Mount thither, then the rays of the true love

Must needs mount up on high with less of life.
But, that our wages are commensurate
With our desert, is part of our delight,
Because we see them neither less nor more.
Hereby the Living Justice makes so sweet
Within us our affection, it may ne'er
Be turned aside to any wickedness.
As diverse voices make sweet notes on earth,
So in this life of ours do diverse seats
Render sweet harmony among these wheels.
And here within the present pearl gives light
The light of Romeo, of whom the work
Was ill requited, though both fair and great.
But they who worked against him in Provence
Laugh not; and so he goes an evil way
Who turns to his own harm others' good deeds.
Four daughters, and each one of them a queen,
Had Raymond Berenger, and this for him
Romeo did, a humble foreigner;
And afterwards distorted words moved him
To call this just man to account, and he
Rendered to him seven and five for ten;
Thence he departed poor, in his old age,
And if the world but knew the heart he had,
As bit by bit he begged his livelihood,
Much as it praises him, it would praise him more."

CANTO VII

"Osanna sanctus Deus Sabaoth,
Superillustrans claritate tua
Felices ignes horum malachoth!"
To its own melody revolving, thus

This substance, upon which a two-fold light
Is doubled, was beheld by me to sing;
And to their dance it and the others moved,
And veiled themselves from me like swiftest sparks
In sudden distance. I was in suspense,
And saying: "Tell her, tell her," to myself,
"Tell her who is my Lady," saying still,
"Who slakes the thirst within me with sweet drops;"
But by that reverence,—the mistress now
Of all my being,—for Be and Ice even,
I was bowed down as one who falls asleep.
Not long did Beatrice let me be thus,
When she began, with smile so radiant
That one were happy with it in the flames:
"By what infallibly appears to me,
How it could be that vengeance, which was just,
With justice was avenged, has set thee thinking;
But I will speedily set free thy mind;
And do thou listen, for my words on thee
A present of great doctrine will bestow.
As he who was not born endured no rein
For his own good upon the power that wills,
He, damning self, damned all his progeny;
Wherefore the human race lay sick down there
For many ages in great error, till
It pleased the Word of God there to descend
Where to His person He that nature joined
Which from its Maker had estranged itself,
By the sole act of His eternal love.
Now turn thy sight to that which now I say:
This nature to its Maker thus united
Was, as it was created, pure and good;
But through itself it came to banishment
From Paradise, because it turned aside

From out the way of truth and from its life.
The penalty, then, offered by the cross,
If measured by the nature there assumed,
None ever bit so justly; and likewise
Was never one of such iniquity,
If we regard the Person suffering,
In whom this nature was contracted thus.
So from one act there issued things diverse;
For unto God and to the Jews was pleasing
One death, whereat earth quaked and heaven opened.
It should no longer now seem hard to thee
When it is told thee that a vengeance just
Was afterwards avenged by a just court.
But I see now that thy mind is involved
From thought to thought within a knot, from which
With great desire it waits to be set free.
Thou sayest: 'I understand well what I hear;
But it is hidden from me wherefore God
For our redemption just this method chose.'
My brother, this decree lies buried from
The eyes of every one, of whom the wit
Has not matured within the flame of love.
But inasmuch as at this work men gaze
So much and see so little, I will say
Why such a method was the worthiest.
Goodness Divine which ever from Itself
Spurns envy, sparkles so, on fire within,
That the eternal beauties are displayed.
That which, without a mean, distils from It,
Has after that no end, for Its imprint,
When It has sealed, can never be removed.
That which, without a mean, rains down from It,
Because it is not subject to the power
Of the new things, is wholly unconfined;

Pleases It most, the most conformed to It; 73
Because the Holy Ardor, lighting all,
Is liveliest in that most like Itself.
Of all these things is the advantage given 76
The human creature, and, if one thing fail,
It needs must fall from its nobility.
It loses liberty through sin alone, 79
Making it unlike to the Highest Good,
So that Its white light scarce illumines it;
And to its dignity it ne'er returns, 82
Unless it fill again the sin-made void,
Ill pleasures balanced with just penalties.
When in its seed your nature wholly sinned, 85
Out of these dignities it was removed
As out of Paradise; not by itself
Could it recover them by any way,— 88
If thou full subtly do consider it,—
Except it pass by one of these two fords:
Either that God, solely by courtesy 91
Of His, had pardoned, or that by himself
Man should have satisfied his folly's debt.
Let now thy gaze be fixed within the abyss 94
Of the eternal counsel, to my words
Holding as closely as thou hast the power.
Now satisfaction man could never make 97
Within his limits, for he could not go
Down in humility, obeying now,
So deep, as in his disobedience 100
He thought to rise; for this cause was man barred
From power by himself to satisfy.
Therefore was God obliged by His own ways 103
To bring man back into his perfect life,—
I say by one way, or, indeed, by both.
But as the work of one who works is prized 106

So much the more, the more it represents
Of the heart's goodness, whence it issued forth;
Goodness Divine, whose stamp is on the world,
With moving onward along all its ways
To lift you again upward was content;
And 'twixt the first day and the final night
Nor was nor shall be along either way
Progress so high and so magnificent;
God was more bounteous to give Himself
To make man able to uplift himself,
Than had He pardoned, of Himself alone;
And all the other methods were but short
Of justice, if the Son of God had not
Humbled Himself to taking on man's flesh.
Now, to fulfil for thee thine every wish,
I turn back to make clear a certain point
That thou mayst view it as I do myself.
Thou sayest: 'I see the water, see the fire,
The air, the earth, and all of them combined
Come to corruption, lasting but a while;'
And yet, these are created things; wherefore,
If that which I have stated has been true,
Against corruption they should be secure.
The angels, brother, and the stainless place
In which thou art now, may be called created
In their whole being, even as they are;
But both the elements which thou hast named,
And whatsoever things are made of them
By a created virtue are informed.
Created was the matter which they have,
Created was the virtue which informs
These stars which round about them have their courses.
The ray and motion of the holy lights
Draw from potentiate elements combined

The soul of every brute and of the plants.
But the Supreme Benignity inspires,
Immediate, your life, enamouring it
So of Itself, that ever afterwards
It longs for It; and thence thou canst besides
Infer your resurrection, if thou call
Again to mind in what way human flesh
Was made, when the first parents both were formed."

CANTO VIII

The imperiled world was wonted to believe
That the fair Cyprian beamed forth mad love,
In the third epicycle as she turned;
Wherefore not only did they honor her
With sacrificing and with votive cry,
The ancient peoples in the ancient error,
But honored Cupid and Dione too,
This one her mother deemed, and that her son,
Who, they related, sat in Dido's lap;
And took from her, with whom I now begin,
The appellation of the star, on which
The sun looks fondly, rearward or in front.
I had not noticed the ascent to it;
But full assurance that I was therein
My Lady gave me, whom I saw now grown
More beautiful. As in a flame a spark
Is seen, as voice is separate from voice,
When one is constant, and one goes and comes;
So I in this light could see other lamps
Move circling swifter and less swift, I think,
In measure with the eternal vision theirs.
From a cold cloud never descended winds

So rapid, visible or not, that they
Would not have seemed hindered and slow to him
Who had beheld these lights divine advance
Toward us, leaving the circling that had first
Begun among the exalted Seraphim.
And amid those who most in front appeared
Hosanna sounded so, that never since
Lacked I desire of hearing it again.
Then one drew nearer to us, and alone
Began: "We to thy pleasuring are all
In readiness, that thou mayst joy in us.
With the celestial Princes we revolve,—
With but one circle circling, and one thirst,—
To whom thou in the world saidst formerly:
'Ye who by intelligence the third heaven move;'
And are so full of love that, to please thee,
A little quiet will not be less sweet."
After my eyes had made their offering
Of reverence to my Lady, and she then
Had made them with herself content and sure,
They turned back to the light, that of itself
Had made such proffer, and: "Say who ye are,"
Were then my words, with great affection stamped.
And how I saw it grow in quantity
And quality through new joy when I spoke,
Thus added to the joys that were its own!
Grown thus, it said to me: "The world below
Held me not long; and had it longer been,
Much evil would not be, that still shall be.
My happiness keeps me concealed from thee,
Which radiates around me, hiding me
As it were a creature swathed in its own silk.
Much didst thou love me, and didst have good cause,
For had I stayed below, I should have shown

Of my own love for thee more than the leaves.
That left-hand bank, which by the Rhone is washed
After it has been mingled with the Sorgue,
Awaited me in due time for its lord;
And that horn of Ausonia, suburbed
By Bari, by Gaeta and Catona,
Below the Tronto's and the Verde's mouths.
Already there was shining on my brow
The crown of that land which the Danube laves
When it has left behind the German banks;
And fair Trinacria, that darkens 'twixt
Pachynus and Pelorus on the gulf
Which is by Eurus' blasts the most disturbed,
Not through Typhoeus but through sulphur rising,
Would have awaited still its sovereigns
From Charles and Rudolph through myself descended,
If evil governing, which always strikes
The hearts of subject peoples, had not moved
Palermo to cry out: 'Die, die!' and if
My brother had foreseen this he would now
Shun Catalonia's greedy poverty,
In order that it might not work his harm;
For truly it is needful to provide
By him or others that his laden bark
Should have no greater burden put on it.
His nature, which of liberal descent
Is niggardly, had need of soldiery
Such as cared not to store away in chests."
"Since I believe that the exalted joy,
Infused in me by what thou sayest, my Lord,
Where every good has both its end and source,
By thee is seen as I myself see it,
It pleases me the more; this too I prize,
That thou discernest that, looking to God.

Glad thou hast made me; so make clear to me,
  Since, speaking, thou hast raised in me a doubt,
  How from sweet seed bitter can issue forth."
This I to him; and he to me: "If I
  Can show one truth to thee, to what thou askest
  Thy face shall turn, as now thy back is turned.
The Good, which the whole realm that thou dost scale
  Revolves and satisfies, makes as a power
  In these great bodies Its own providence;
And not the natures merely are foreseen,
  In that Mind which is perfect by itself,
  But their safe-ordering as well as they.
Hence whatsoever arrow this bow shoots,
  As if disposed, falls to an end foreseen,
  Even as a thing directed to its mark.
The heaven through which thou journeyest would work
  In such wise its effects, were this not so,
  That they would not be works of art, but ruins;
This can not be, if the intellects which move
  These stars are not defective, and the First
  Defective too, who them imperfect made.
Wilt thou have this truth made more clear?" And I:
  "Not so, for it is impossible, I see,
  That nature weary in what is required."
Whence he again: "Now, say, would it be worse
  That man on earth were not a citizen?"
  "Yes," I replied, "no reason ask I here."
"And can it be, except they live below
  In divers ways for divers offices?
  No, if your Master writes well on this point."
By such deduction he had come thus far,
  And then concluded: "It must needs be, hence,
  That diverse are the roots of your effects;
Whence one is Solon, one is Xerxes born,

One is Melchisedech, and one is he
Who lost his son when flying through the air.
The nature of the spheres, which is a seal
To mortal wax, practises well its art
Without distinction of this inn from that.
Hence it befalls that Esau is apart
In seed from Jacob, and Quirinus comes
From so mean sire, he is assigned to Mars.
Nature begotten would go on its way
From that of its begetters never changed,
Except God's Providence should overcome.
Now that which was behind thee is before;
But that thou learn my joy in thee, I will
That with a corollary thou be cloaked.
Ever does nature come to evil test,
If it find fortune with itself at odds,
Like every other seed out of its place.
And if the world down there would fix its mind
On the foundation-base that nature lays,
Obeying that, it would have people good.
But to religion ye turn him aside
Born to be girded with a sword; and him
Who is a man for preaching ye make king;
So that your track is outside of the road."

CANTO IX

After I was enlightened by thy Charles,
Beautiful Clemence, of those frauds he told me
Which were to be experienced by his seed,
But said: "Speak not, and let the years roll on;"
So I am able to say naught, except
That just lament shall follow on your wrongs.

And now the life within that holy light
Toward the sun that fills it had turned back,
As to that Good sufficing for all things.
Ah, souls deceived and creatures impious,
Who turn aside your hearts from such a Good,
Directing unto vanity your brows!
And lo, another of those splendors made
Its way toward me, and signified its will
To do me pleasure, brightening outwardly.
The eyes of Beatrice, which were now fixed
Upon me as before, made me assured
Of dear assenting unto my desire.
"Pray, grant my will a speedy answering,
O blessed spirit," said I; "give me proof
That what I think, I may reflect on thee."
Whereon the light which was still new to me,
From out its deep where it was singing first,
Went on as one whom doing good delights:
"Within that region of the wicked land
Of Italy, that 'twixt Rialto lies
And Brenta's springs and Piave's, is a hill
That rises to no lofty altitude
And whence a fire-brand came down formerly
That made a great assault upon these parts.
From one and the same root sprang it and I;
Cunizza was I called, and I glow here,
For I was overcome by this star's light.
But I grant pardon to myself with joy
For that which caused my lot, which grieves me not,—
Which to your common herd seems hard, perchance.
Of the resplendent and beloved jewel
Of this our heaven, nearest to me now,
Great fame was left behind, and ere it die
This hundredth year shall come a fifth time yet.

See whether man should make himself excel,
So that the first may leave another life!
And to this gives no thought the present crowd
That Tagliamento and Adige hem in;
And which, though smitten, repents not yet; but soon
It will befall that Padua at the Marsh
Will change the water that Vicenza bathes,
Because the peoples are 'gainst duty stubborn.
And there where Sile and Cagnano join,
One lords it and holds high his head, for whom
The ensnaring net is making even now.
Tears shall yet fall in Feltro for the breach
Of her inhuman pastor's faith, so shameful,
One never entered Malta for the like.
Exceeding large would be the vat that should
Receive the life-blood of the Ferrarese,
And weary who should weigh it ounce by ounce,
Of which this courteous priest will make a gift
To show himself his party's; and such gifts
To the region's life will be conformable.
Mirrors there are above,—ye call them Thrones,—
From which God judging sheds the light on us,
So that to us these words seem to be good."
Here she, grown silent, had to me a look
As if she were turned elsewhere by the wheel
In which she put herself, as formerly.
The other joy, already known to me
As an illustrious thing, grew in my sight
Like a fine ruby on which sunlight falls.
Brightness is through rejoicing gained on high,
As here a smile; but down below the shade
Grows dark without, even as the mind is sad.
"As God sees all, and thy sight is in Him,"
Said I, "O blessed Spirit, so no wish

Can ever steal itself away from thee.
Thy voice, then, which is ever gladdening heaven,
Joined to the singing of those fires devout,
Which of six wings make for themselves a cowl,—
Why satisfies it not now my desires?
Surely I should not wait for thee to ask,
If I could enter thee as thou dost me."
"The greatest vale in which the water spreads,"
Began his words then saying, "save that sea,
Which is a garland round about the earth,
'Twixt shores discordant 'gainst the sun extends
So far, that it makes a meridian
Where the horizon first it is wont to make.
I was a dweller on that valley's shore
Between the Ebro and the Magra's course
Which, short, parts Genoese from Tuscan land.
One sunrise nearly and one sunset knowing,
Sit Buggea and the city whence I sprang
Which warmed the harbor once with its own blood.
Folco that people called me unto whom
My name was known, and now this heaven stamps
Itself with me, as I was stamped with it;
For Belus' daughter was no more on fire,
Wronging Sichaeus and Creusa too,
Than I, while it comported with my locks;
Nor she of Rhodope, deluded by
Demophoön, nor yet Alcides, when
He held Iole shut within his heart.
Yet here is no repentance, only smiles;
Not for the fault, which comes not back to mind,
But for the Power which ordered and foresaw.
We gaze here on the Art which beautifies
Effect so great; and we discern the Good
By which the world below turns heavenly.

But that thou mayst bear hence thy wishes all
Fulfilled that have been born within this sphere,
Still further it behoves me to proceed.
Thou fain wouldst know who is within this light
That here beside me, like a ray of sun
In limpid water, is now sparkling so.
Therefore know thou that therewithin at rest
Is Rahab, and our order, joined by her,
Is sealed by her in the supreme degree.
First of the souls of the Triumphant Christ
Was she received up by this heaven where
The shadow of your earth comes to its point.
Well it behoved to leave her in some heaven
As palm of that exalted victory
Which with one palm and the other had been gained;
Because she favored when first glorious
Was Joshua upon the Holy Land,
Which touches memory little in the pope.
Thy city which of that one is a plant
Who first upon his Maker turned his back,
And of whom is the envy so bewept,
Brings forth and scatters the accursed flower
By which the sheep and lambs are led astray,
For of its shepherd it has made a wolf.
For this the Gospel has been left aside
And the great Doctors, and alone perused
Are the Decretals, as their margins show.
On this are pope and cardinals intent;
They go not in their thoughts to Nazareth,
Where Gabriel spread his wings; but Vatican
Shall with the other chosen parts of Rome,
In which has found their place of burial
The soldiery of Peter's following,
Be soon set free from the adultery."

CANTO X

LOOKING upon His own Son with the Love
Which is eternally breathed forth by both,
The Power primal and ineffable
Made with such order whatsoe'er revolves
Through mind or space, that he who looks on it
Can not remain without a taste of Him.
Lift then, O reader, to the exalted wheels
With me thy sight straight upward to that part
Where the one motion on the other strikes;
And there begin to gaze with love upon
That Master's art, which He within Himself
So loves that from it He ne'er turns His eye.
Behold how from that point there branches off
The sloping circle that bears up the orbs
To satisfy the world that calls on them;
And if their path were not oblique, in vain
Would many a virtue be in heaven, while
Well-nigh all potency were dead below;
And if from straight its deviation were
Greater or less, then great were the defect
Above in mundane order, and below.
Remain, O reader, then upon thy bench,
Reflecting on that which is offered thee,
Wilt thou have joy rather than weariness.
I have set before thee; henceforth feed thyself;
For to itself is drawing all my care
That matter of which I am made a scribe.
Of nature's ministers the mightiest,
Who stamps the worth of heaven on the world
And with his light measures the time for us,
With that part which above is called to mind

Conjoined was circling through the spirals, where
He ever earlier presents himself.
And I was with him; but of the ascent
I had no knowledge otherwise than one
Before a first thought knows of its approach.
It is Beatrice who thus conducts from good
To better with such instantaneousness
That what she does has no extent in time.
How lucent of itself must that have been
Which was within the sun where I had come,
Apparent not by color but by light!
Though I should call on genius, art and use,
I could not tell so one could picture it;
But one may trust, and let him long to see.
And, are the powers of our fancy low
For such a height, it is no marvel, since
Beyond the sun was never eye could go.
Such there was the fourth family of Him,
The exalted Father, who e'er satisfies it,
Showing how He breathes forth and how begets.
And Beatrice began: "Give thanks, give thanks
Unto the angels' Sun, who by His grace
Has raised thee to this one perceived by sense."
Never was heart of mortal so disposed
Unto devotion and with all its will
So ready to betake itself to God
As I was at those words; and all my love
Was so bestowed on Him, that Beatrice
Was thereby in oblivion eclipsed.
But it displeased her not; and so she smiled
That by the splendor of her smiling eyes
She turned my mind from one to many things.
Lights living, overwhelming, many I saw
Make us a centre and themselves a crown,

More sweet in voice than in appearance bright.
The daughter of Latona girdled thus
We see sometimes when the air impregnated
Has thus retained the thread that makes her zone.
In heaven's court, whence I come back, are jewels
Many, so precious and so beautiful
That they may not be taken from that realm;
Of them these lights were singing; and let him
Who does not wing himself to fly up there,
Look for the dumb to bring the tidings thence.
When with their singing thus those burning suns
Had circled round about us the third time
Like stars not far off from the unmoving poles,
They seemed as ladies, not released from dancing,
But having paused, and, silent, listening,
Till they have caught again the notes renewed.
And within one I heard beginning: "Since
The ray of grace, by which enkindled is
True love, and which increases thereupon
By loving multiplied, so shines in thee
That it conducts thee upward by that stair
Which none descend but to ascend again,
He who refused to give thee from his flask
Wine for thy thirst, would not be free except
As water which descends not to the sea.
Thou wouldst fain know with what plants is enflowered
This garland, which, encircling, joys to see
The Lady fair who strengthens thee for heaven.
I was one of the lambs, that holy flock
Which Dominic is leading by a way
Where they will fatten, if they wander not.
This one, the nearest at my right, to me
Was brother and master; Albert of Cologne
Was he, and Thomas of Aquino I.

If thus of all the rest thou wouldst be told,
Follow behind my speaking with thy sight,
Circling above along the blessed wreath.
That flaming next is issuing from the smile
Of Gratian, who gave one and the other court
Such aid as pleases well in Paradise.
The other who next him adorns our choir
Was Peter, who like the poor widow gave
His treasure offering to Holy Church.
The fifth light, the most beautiful of ours,
Breathes from such love, that all the world below
Craves to have tidings of it; there within
Is that exalted mind in which was put
Wisdom so deep, that, if the truth is true,
To see so much a second has not risen.
Next see that candle's light, which in the flesh
Below with farthest penetration saw
The angelic nature and its ministry.
Within the other little light he smiles,
Who was the advocate of Christian times,
And of whose Latin Augustine made use.
Now if thou leadest on the eye of the mind
From light to light, my praises following,
Already for the eighth thou stayest with thirst.
Therein, through seeing every good, rejoices
The holy soul, who the fallacious world
Makes manifest to him who listens well.
Below within Cieldauro lies the body
Whence it was hunted forth, and came itself
From martyrdom and exile to this peace.
See yonder flaming of the glowing breath
Of Isidore, and Bede, and of that Richard
Who in contemplating was more than man.
This light from which thy look returns to me,

Is of a spirit, who in his grave thoughts
Seemed to himself but slow to come to death;
It is the light eternal of Siger
Who, as he lectured in the Street of Straw,
Syllogized truths that were invidious."
Then as a horologe which summons us
At the arising of the Bride of God
To seek the Bridegroom's love with matin-song,
In which one part another draws and thrusts,
Its *tin! tin!* sounding with so sweet a note
That the well-ordered spirit swells with love;
So saw I move itself the glorious wheel
And give back voice to voice in harmony
And with a sweetness that can not be known,
Save there where joy prolongs itself for aye.

CANTO XI

INSENSATE care of mortals, what defects
Are in those syllogisms which make thee beat
Thy wings to what is base! One went his way
In the pursuit of laws, another was
For aphorisms, and for the priesthood one,
And one would reign by sophisms and by force,
One plunder, one in business of the state,
One in the pleasure of the flesh involved
Was wearying himself, and one was giving
Himself to idleness,—while disengaged
From all these things I was with Beatrice
Above in heaven thus gloriously received.
When each one had in turning reached the point
Upon the circle where he was before,
He stopped, like candle in a candlestick.

And I could hear within that light which first
Had spoken to me, how it thus began,
Making itself the clearer as it smiled:
"Even as I am glowing with its ray,
So, as I look on the Eternal Light,
I apprehend the occasion of thy thoughts.
Thou art in doubt, and wishest that my words
Be made more clear in open, fuller speech
To be upon the level of thy sense,
When I before now said: 'Where they well fatten,'
And when I said: 'A second has not risen;'
And here is need that one distinguish well.
The Providence, the Ruler of the world
With counsel such that all created sight
Is overcome before it reach the depths,
So that the bride of Him, who with loud cries
Espoused her with the blessed blood, might go
To her Beloved, in herself secure
And also still more faithful unto Him,
Ordained, to favor her, two princes, who
On this side and on that should be her guides,
The one all seraph in his burning zeal,
The other through his wisdom on the earth
A splendor with the light of cherubim.
My words shall be of one, because of both
He speaks who praises one, whiche'er he takes,
For to one end the works of each were done.
Between Tupino and the water flowing
Down from the hill blessed Ubaldo chose,
A fertile slope hangs from a mountain's height,
From which Perugia's Porta Sole feels
The cold and heat; behind it Gualdo joins
Nocera to bemoan their heavy yoke.
From this slope at the place where most it breaks

Its steepness, rose upon the world a sun,
As from the Ganges this one does sometimes.
Wherefore let him who of this place would talk
Not say Ascesi,—that were speaking short,—
But Orient, if he would fitly speak.
Not from his rising very far as yet
Did he begin to cause the earth to feel
Of his great virtue certain comforting;
For he in youth incurred his father's wrath
For such a lady, to whom, as to death,
The gate of pleasure is unbarred by none;
And in the presence of his spiritual court,
Et coram patre he was joined to her;
Thereafter day by day he loved her more.
Deprived of her first husband she remained
A thousand and a hundred years and more
Despised, obscure, even till him, unwooed.
To hear that he, who made the world to fear,
Had found her with Amyclas free from care
When his voice sounded, had availed her not,
Nor had availed her constancy and strength,
Such that, when Mary at its foot remained,
Along with Christ she mounted on the cross.
But lest I too obscurely should proceed,
Francis and Poverty henceforth regard
As these two lovers in my speech diffuse.
Their concord and their looks of happiness
Made love and wonder and a sweet regard
To be the cause of holy thoughts; so that
The venerable Bernard was the first
To bare his feet, and following such peace,
To run, and, running, to himself seem slow.
O unknown riches! O prolific good!
Egidius bares his feet, Sylvester his,

Following the bridegroom, so the bride attracts.
Then goes his way that father and that master
With her, his lady; and that family
Already girded with the humble cord;
Baseness of heart did not weigh down his brow
For being Pietro Bernardone's son,
Nor for appearing marvelously despised;
But he, king-like, opened to Innocent
His hard intention, and from him received
The first seal for his Order. Afterwards
When the poor folk had grown in following
After that one, of whom the marvelous life
Better in heaven's glory would be sung,
The Eternal Spirit through Honorius
Had bound the circle of a second crown
Upon this archimandrite's holy will.
And when he had, through thirst for martyrdom,
In the proud presence of the Sultan preached
Christ and the others of His following,
And, since he found the people too unripe
To be converted, not to stay in vain,
Returned to the fruit of the Italian herbage,
On the harsh rock Tiber from Arno parting
From Christ did he receive the final seal,
Which for two years his members bare about.
When He, who to such good set him apart,
Was pleased to draw him up to the reward
Which by his self-abasement he had earned,
Unto his brethren as to rightful heirs
His dearest Lady he commended, while
Commanding that they love her faithfully;
And from her bosom the illustrious soul
Willed to go forth, returning to its realm,
And for his body willed no other bier.

Think now what that one was who worthily
Could be a colleague to keep Peter's bark
On the deep sea upon the rightful course!
And this our patriarch was; wherefore whoe'er
Is following after him as he commands,
Thou mayst discern loads goodly merchandise.
But for new pasturage his flock has grown
So greedy that it can not fail to be
That it should spread abroad through various glades;
And by as much as they go farther off
From him remote and vagabond, the more
Empty of milk they turn back to the fold.
There are indeed of such as fear the harm
And cleave close to the shepherd; but so few,
A little cloth suffices for their cowls.
Now if the words I utter be distinct,
If thou attentive be in listening,
If that which I have said thou call to mind,
Thy wish will be content in part, because
The plant, from which this hewing, thou shalt see,
And see how reasons he who wears the thong:—
'Where they well fatten, if they wander not.' ''

CANTO XII

Soon as the blessed flame had taken up
The final word to give it utterance,
Began the holy mill-stone to revolve,
And in its wheeling had not wholly turned
Before another, circling, shut it in,
Motion to motion fitted, song to song;
Song which excels that of our muses so,
Our sirens, in those dulcet pipes, as does
A primal splendor that which is reflected.

Like two bows curving through a tender cloud,
  Both of like coloring and parallel,
  At the command of Juno to her maid,
The one without born of the one within,
  Like the words uttered by that wanderer
  Consumed by love as vapor by the sun;
And causing here the people to foreknow,
  Through God's established covenant with Noah,
  About the world no more to be submerged:
So of those sempiternal roses turned
  Around us the two garlands, with, likewise,
  The outer to the inner answering.
After the dancing and the exalted, grand
  Festivity of flaming and of song,
  Light full of joy and gentleness with light,
Had come to rest at once and with one will,
  Just as the eyes which must together close
  And open at the pleasure moving them,
Out of the heart of one of these new lights
  There came a voice, which made me seem the needle
  To the star in turning me to where it was,
And said: "The Love which makes me beautiful
  Draws me of the other leader to discourse,
  By whom is spoken here so well of mine.
It is fit that where one is the other be
  Led in, so that as they united warred,
  Likewise together may their glory shine.
The ranks of Christ, which it has cost so dear
  To arm again, behind the standard now
  Were moving, slow, full of distrust and few,
When He, who reigns forever Emperor,
  Provided for the imperiled soldiery
  Through grace alone, not that it merited;
And as was said, sent to His Bride as aid

Two champions at whose doings, at whose words,
The people gone astray correct themselves.
In that part of the world where Zephyr sweet
Rises to open the new leaves with which
Europe is seen to clothe herself anew,
Not very far from where the surges beat,
Behind which, for his long, swift course, the sun
Sometimes from every man conceals himself,
Is Callaroga's site, the fortunate,
'Neath the great shield's protection, upon which
The lion both is subject and subdues.
Within it was the lover amorous
Of the Christian faith, the holy athlete, born,
Benignant to his own, and harsh to his foes.
And, soon as once created, was his mind
With living virtue so replete, that in
His mother it made her a prophetess.
When were complete between him and the Faith
The espousals at the sacred font, where each
With mutual salvation dowered each,
The lady, by whom the assent was given
For him, beheld in dream the marvelous fruit
That was to issue from him and his heirs;
And that he might be what he was in name,
A spirit went forth hence that he be called
By His possessive whose he wholly was,
And Dominic was he called. I speak of him
As of the tiller of the field, whom Christ
Elected to His garden for His aid.
Truly he seemed a messenger of Christ
And His familiar; the first love he showed
Was for the first of counsels given by Christ.
Awake and silent he was oftentimes
Found by his nurse upon the ground, as though

He would have said: 'It is for this I came.'
Oh, truly Felix, thou his father art! 79
O mother his, truly Joanna thou!
If this interpreted means as is said.
Not for the world, for which men now are toiling, 82
Following the Ostian and Thaddeus,
But for a love of the true manna, he
In little time to a great teacher grew, 85
Such that he set himself to tend the vines,
Which soon grow white, if the vinedresser fail;
And from the Seat, which to the righteous poor 88
Was more benign ere now,—not in itself,
But through the one who sits degenerate,—
Not to dispense some two or three for six, 91
Not the first vacancy in fortune's gift,
Non decimas quae sunt pauperum Dei,
Asked he; but would against the erring world 94
Have leave to combat for that seed, of which
Are four and twenty plants surrounding thee.
With doctrine and with will together then 97
With the apostolic office he moved on
Like to a torrent pressed by a lofty vein;
And on the stocks of heresy he smote 100
With rushing power, there most instinct with life
Where the resistance was most vigorous.
From him then divers streams had origin, 103
Watering the garden of the catholic
So that its bushes stand the more alive.
If such was one wheel of the chariot 106
In which the Holy Church made her defence,
And on the field subdued her civil strife,
To thee in truth should be most evident 109
The other's excellence, concerning which
So courteous was Thomas ere I came.

The track, however, which the highest part
  Of its circumference made, is derelict,
  So that where crust was, there is now a mould.
His household, which went straight on, with their feet
  Upon his foot-prints, are so turned about
  That he in front treads upon him behind.
And soon shall men see of the harvesting
  Of that ill culture, and the tare complain
  That of the granary it is bereft.
Yet I affirm, that whoso leaf by leaf
  Would search our volume might still find a page
  Where he could read: 'I am what I am wont;'
But it will not be from Casale, nor
  From Acquasparta, whence such come that one
  Evades the writing, and one narrows it.
Bonaventura's life am I, who sprang
  From Bagnoregio, who e'er placed behind
  The left-hand care in his great offices.
Illuminato and Augustine are here,
  Who were among the first unsandaled poor
  That in the cord made themselves friends to God.
Hugh of Saint Victor is along with them,
  And Peter Mangiadore; and Peter of Spain,
  Who shines below in his twelve books; and Nathan,
The prophet; and the metropolitan
  Chrysostom; Anselm; and Donatus, he
  Who deigned to the first art to set his hand;
Raban is here, and, shining at my side
  Is the Calabrian Abbot Joachim,
  Who with prophetic spirit was endowed.
To envy of so great a paladin
  Have I been moved by the ardent courtesy
  Of Brother Thomas and his measured words;
And with me has been moved this company."

CANTO XIII

Let him imagine, who would understand
  Aright what I now saw (and keep the image,
  While I am speaking, like a solid rock),
That fifteen stars, which in their different fields
  The heaven vivify with radiance such
  As overcomes all denseness of the air;
Imagine that the Wain, for which the bosom
  Suffices of our heaven both night and day,
  So that it hides not when it turns its pole;
Imagine that the opening of that horn,
  Which has beginning at that axle's point
  On which the Prime Wheel in its motion turns,—
Have constituted of themselves two signs
  In heaven such as Minos' daughter made,
  Feeling the chill of death; and that the one
Within the other have its rays, while both
  Revolve in such a manner, that one first
  Advance and have the other following;
And he shall have foreshadowed, as it were,
  The very constellation's two-fold dance,
  Which circled round the point at which I was;
Since it is by as much beyond our use,
  As is beyond Chiana's wont to move
  That heaven's which surpasses all the rest.
Not Bacchus there nor paean did they sing
  But divine nature in its Persons three,
  And It with the human in one Person joined.
The measure of their song and circling filled,
  Those holy lights attentive were to us,
  Finding felicity from care to care.
In those harmonious divinities

The silence then was broken by that light
In which the wondrous life of God's poor man
Was told me, and it said: "When the one straw
Is threshed, when its seed now is laid away,
Sweet love invites me to beat out the other.
Thou dost believe that into that breast, whence
The rib was drawn to form the cheeks so fair
Of her whose palate costs the whole world dear,
And into that one which, pierced by the lance,
Before and since such satisfaction made
As overcomes the balance of all sin,
Whatever it is granted to possess
Of light to human nature by that Power
Which made them both completely was infused.
And so thou wonderest at what I said
Above, when I told that no second had
The good, which in the fifth light is enclosed.
Open thine eyes to what I answer now
And thou shalt see my words and thy belief
Become a circle's centre in the truth.
Both that which dies not and that which can die
Are but the splendor cast by that idea
Which is brought forth in loving by our Sire;
Because that living light, that from its Fount
Of light so streams that It parts not from It
Nor from the Love which joins with them, the third,
Of its own goodness makes its radiance one,
Mirrored, as it were, in nine subsistences,
Itself eternally remaining one.
Thence it descends to the last potencies
Downward from act to act becoming such
As then to cause but brief contingencies;
And these contingencies I understand
To be the generated things produced

By the moving heaven, with seed and without.
The wax of these and that which gives it form
Is not of one mode, and so 'neath the signet
Ideal, then, it more or less shines through;
Whence it will happen that a tree, the same
In species, bears a better or worse fruit;
And ye are born with intellects unlike.
And if the wax were perfectly prepared,
And were the heavens in their highest power,
The whole light of the seal would then appear,
But nature gives it ever with defect,
For she is like the artist at his work
With skill in art and with a trembling hand.
But if by the ardent love, the Vision clear
Of the First Power be disposed and stamped,
All of perfection has been there acquired.
Thus was the earth made worthy formerly
Of all perfection in the living being;
And thus was made the Virgin to conceive.
So I commend the opinion thou dost hold
That human nature never was nor e'er
Shall be what it in those two persons was.
Now, if I were no further to proceed,
'Then how can it be said that that one was
Without an equal?' would begin thy words.
But, so that what appears not may be clear,
Think who he was, and of the cause which moved him,
When *Ask!* was said to him, to make request.
I have not spoken so, that thou canst not
See plainly that he was a king who chose
Wisdom that he might be a king indeed;
Not for the knowing in what number are
The Motors here on high, nor if *necesse*
With a contingent ever *necesse* made;

Not, *si est dare primum motum esse,*
Or, if in the semicircle can be made
A triangle and not rectangular.
Wherefore, if thou note this and what I said,
A kingly prudence is that peerless seeing,
Which with its arrow my intention strikes.
And if thou turn clear eyes to the 'has risen,'
Thou wilt observe that solely it respects
Kings who are many, and the good are rare.
With this distinction take what I have said
Which thus can stand with what thou dost believe
Of the first father and of our Beloved.
And be this ever to thy feet as lead
To make thee slow to move, as one fatigued,
Both to the yea and nay which thou seest not;
For he is very low among the fools,
Who makes an affirmation or denies
Without distinction in this case or that;
Because it comes to pass that oftentimes
The rash opinion leans toward the false,
And then self-love will bind the intellect.
For more than vainly does he leave the shore
Since he returns not such as he sets out,
Who fishes for the truth and has not skill;
And of this are Parmenides, Melissus,
Bryson, and many such as went their way
Not knowing whither, open proofs to the world.
Sabellius and Arius, and those fools
Did so, who were as swords to Holy Writ
In making faces crooked that were straight.
Let not the folk be yet too confident
In judging, as he is who in the field
Would reckon up the ears ere they are ripe;
For I have seen all winter long at first

The briar show itself rigid, ungentle,
And later bear the rose upon its tip;
And I saw once a ship, that straight and swift
Had sailed across the sea on its whole course
At last to perish at the harbor's mouth.
Let not Dame Bertha think or Goodman Martin,
For seeing one man rob, another pray,
That they have seen them in the plan of God;
For one of them may rise, the other fall."

CANTO XIV

From a round vessel's centre to its rim
Or from its rim to centre water moves
As it is struck within or from outside.
Into my mind had fallen suddenly
What I am saying at the moment when
The glorious life of Thomas ceased to speak,
Because of the similitude which rose
Of speech of his and that of Beatrice,
Whom after him it pleased thus to begin:
"This man has need,—and tells you not of it,
Neither by voice nor by his thought as yet,—
Of following to its root another truth.
Tell him if it shall so be that the light,
With which your substance blossoms, will remain
With you eternally as it is now;
And, if it do remain, say to him how,
When ye shall be again made visible,
It can be that it injure not your sight."
As when by greater gladness urged and drawn
Those dancing in a ring will all at once
Raise up their voice and lend their motions joy,

So at her eager and devout request
  The holy circles showed a new delight
  In turning and in wondrous melody.
Whoso laments for this that here we die
  To live up there on high, has not beheld
  There the refreshment of the eternal rain.
That One and Two and Three which ever lives,
  And ever reigns in Three and Two and One,
  Not circumscribed, and circumscribing all,
Three times was by each of those spirits sung
  With such a melody as well might be
  Of every merit fitting recompense.
And I heard, in the lesser circle's light
  The most divine, a modest voice, perchance
  Such as the Angel's was to Mary, thus
Reply: "As long as lasts the festival
  Of Paradise, so long our love shall cast
  About us such a vesture's radiance.
Its brightness shall be as our ardor is,
  Our ardor as our vision, and that such
  As is the grace it has above its worth.
When, glorious and sanctified, the flesh
  Shall be put on again, our persons then
  Will be more pleasing, being all complete;
Wherefore, whatever of gratuitous light
  The Supreme Good gives us will be increased,
  Light which prepares us for beholding Him;
Whence it must be the vision shall increase,
  Increase the ardor which by that is kindled,
  Increase the radiance which comes from this.
But even as a coal which gives a flame
  That by a vivid glowing it outdoes
  So that it guards its semblance, thus
Shall this effulgence, which now circles us

Be in appearance by that flesh surpassed
Which all this while the earth is covering;
Nor can so great light weary us, because
The organs of the body shall be strong
For all that which can then give us delight."
So ready and so eager seemed to me
Both one and the other choir to say *Amen*,
They showed for their dead bodies true desire.
Perhaps not only for themselves, but too
For mothers, fathers, and the rest held dear
Before they had become eternal flames.
And lo, around in brightness uniform,
A lustre rose beyond that which was there,
Like a horizon that is growing bright.
As at the rise of early evening
Begin in the heavens new appearances
So that the sight will seem and not seem true:
It seemed to me that new subsistences
I there began to see, and a ring form
Outside the other two circumferences.
O very sparkling of the Holy Spirit!
How sudden and how glowing it became
Before my eyes, that, vanquished, bore it not!
But Beatrice, so smiling-beautiful
Then showed herself to me, it must be left
Among those sights that followed not the mind.
Thence my eyes took new power to lift themselves
Once more, and with my Lady now alone
I saw myself to higher bliss translated.
That I was lifted higher I well perceived
By the enkindled smiling of the star
Which seemed to be more ruddy than its wont.
With all my heart, and with that speech which is
One and the same in all, I made to God

A holocaust befitting the new grace;
And not yet was exhausted in my breast
The ardor of the sacrifice before
I knew my offering had been received
Propitiously; for with such ruddy glowing
Splendors appeared within two rays, I said:
"O Helios, who so adornest them!"
Even as with lesser and with greater lights
Marked out, the Milky Way appears so white
Between the poles of the world, the truly wise
Are made to doubt, so, starry in Mars' depths,
Those rays made up the venerable sign
Which in a circle quadrants joining make.
And here my memory outstrips my wit;
Because in such wise that cross flashed forth Christ,
Aught to compare with it I can not find.
But he who takes his cross and follows Christ
Shall yet excuse me for what I say not
When in His glowing lightning he sees Christ.
From horn to horn and between top and base
Were lights in motion, glistening brilliantly
As they would meet each other or would pass.
Thus are the particles of bodies here,
Straight and awry, in motion swift and slow,
In their appearance changing, long and short,
Seen moving in the light, of which a band
Is sometimes in the darkness men procure
For their protection with their thought and skill.
As harp and viol well attempered, strung
Of many strings, make sweetly tinkling sounds
To him by whom the meaning is not grasped,
So from the lights which there appeared to me
Was gathered through the cross a melody
Which rapt me, though I knew not what the hymn.

I knew full well it was of lofty praise,
For "*Rise and conquer!*" came to me, who was
As one who understood not and yet heard.
So much enamoured with it I became
That until then there was not anything
Had held me bound with fettering so sweet.
Perchance my words appear too confident,
Deeming the pleasure less of those fair eyes
In which I gaze and longing is at rest.
But who considers that the living seals
Of every beauty have more power, the higher,
And that I had not there turned round to them,
He can excuse me wherein I accuse
Myself for my excusing, and may see
That I speak truth; for the holy joy is here
Not banned, since it grows purer as it mounts.

CANTO XV

A WILL benign,—into which ever love
That righteously inspires resolves itself,
As into evil will, cupidity,—
Silence imposed on that sweet-sounding lyre,
And caused to come to rest the holy strings,
Which heaven's right hand both loosens and makes tense.
How shall to righteous prayers those substances
Be deaf, who, that they might give me the will
To pray to them, were still, with one accord?
It is well that without end one should lament
Who, for the love of aught that does not last,
Despoils himself forever of that love.
As through the tranquil and pure evening skies
Rushes from time to time a sudden fire,

Causing to move the eyes that were at ease,
And seems to be a star that changes place,
Save that from where it was enkindled, naught
Is lost, and its enduring is but brief:
So from the arm which stretches to the right
Down to that cross's foot there ran a star
From out the constellation that shone there;
Not from its ribbon did the gem depart,
But through the radial band it ran along,
As it were a fire through alabaster seen.
With such affection did Anchises' shade
Come forward, if we trust our greatest Muse,
When in Elysium he perceived his son.
"O sanguis meus, O superinfusa
Gratia Dei, sicut tibi, cui
Bis unquam coeli ianua reclusa?"
Thus spoke that light; so I gave heed to it.
Then to my Lady I turned back my gaze,
And at the sight of both was struck with awe.
For there within her eyes glowed such a smile
That I thought with my own to touch the depths
Both of my grace and of my Paradise.
Then, joyous both to hear and look upon,
The spirit added to his first words things
I understood not, so profound his speech;
Nor did he hide himself from me by choice
But by necessity, for his conception
Above the mark of mortals raised itself.
And when the bow of his affection's fire
Had spent so much of heat, that his words fell
Toward the mark of our intelligence,
The first thing that was understood by me
Was this: "Blessed be Thou, O Three and One,
Who art so greatly courteous in my seed!"

And then: "A hunger pleasing and long felt,
From the great volume's reading drawn, in which
Is never any change of white or black,
Thou hast relieved, my son, within this light,
In which I speak to thee, thanks be to her,
Who gave thee feathers for the lofty flight.
Thou dost believe that thy thought streams to me
From that One who is First, as radiate
From one, if that be known, the five and six;
And so thou dost not ask me who I am,
And why more joyful I appear to thee
Than any other in this happy throng.
Thou dost believe the truth, because the lesser
And great of this life on that mirror gaze,
In which, ere thou dost think, thou spread'st thy thought.
But, that the sacred love, in which I watch
With ceaseless vision, and which makes me thirst
With sweet desire, may better be fulfilled,
Let now thy voice secure, happy and bold
Sound forth the will, sound the desire, to which
My answer has already been decreed."
I turned to Beatrice, and she had heard
Before I spoke, and granted me a sign
Which made to grow the wings of my desire.
Then said I: "When the Prime Equality
Appeared to you, as of one weight became
Affection and intelligence to each;
Because the sun, which with his heat and light
Made you to glow and burn, so equal is
That all comparisons with it fall short.
But will in mortals and their faculty,
For reason that is manifest to you,
Are variously feathered in their wings.
Whence I, a mortal, feel myself in this

Unequal state, and so, save with my heart,
For thy paternal welcome give not thanks.
But, living topaz, thee I supplicate,
Who gem-like in this precious jewel art,
That thou wouldst satisfy me with thy name."
"O leaf of mine, in whom I took delight
In mere expectancy, I was thy root."
Such a beginning made he, answering;
Then said to me: "That one from whom is named
Thy family, and who a hundred years
And more circles the Mountain's lowest round,
He was my son, and thy great-grandsire; truly
It were befitting that thou shortenedst
For him the long fatigue with works of thine.
Florence within the ancient circling walls,
From which she still receives both tierce and nones,
Was then in peace abiding, sober, chaste.
No necklace had she and no coronet,
No dames with broidered shoes, no girdle worn
More to be looked at than the wearer's self.
No daughter at her birth as yet would cause
Fear in her father, for the time and dowry
Did not exceed the bound this side or that.
She had no houses void of families;
Nor yet had Sardanapalus arrived
To show what in a chamber may be done.
Nor yet had Montemalo been surpassed
By your Uccellatoio; which, as surpassed
In mounting up, so shall be in its fall.
Bellincion Berti I have seen go girt
With leather and with bone, and his dame leave
Her mirror and not have a painted face;
Him of the Nerli, him of the Vecchio, too,
I have seen contented with their furs unlined,

And their dames with the spindle and the flax.
O fortune-favored women! Each of them
Sure of her burial-place, and none as yet
Deserted in her bed because of France!
And one would watch the cradle carefully,
And comforting, would use the speech which first
To fathers and to mothers gives delight;
Another, as she from the distaff drew
The thread, would to her household tell the tales
About the Trojans, Fiesole and Rome.
For a Cianghella, a Lapo Saltarello,
Would have been reckoned then as marvelous
As Cincinnatus or Cornelia now.
To so reposeful, to so fair a life
Of citizens, to a community
So trusty, and to such a pleasant inn,
Mary, appealed to with loud cries, gave me,
And in your ancient Baptistery, at once
Christian and Cacciaguida I became.
Moronto was my brother, and Eliseo;
My wife came from the valley of the Po,
And from that source thy surname was derived.
I followed, next, Conrad, the Emperor,
And he girt me as of his soldiery,
Into such favor came I by good work.
Following him, I went against that law
Iniquitous, whose people now usurp
Through guiltiness of pastors, your just rights.
In that place and by that foul folk was I
Loosed from the bands of the deceitful world,
By love of which are many souls defiled;
And came from martyrdom unto this peace."

CANTO XVI

How petty our nobility of blood!
  If thou dost make the folk to boast of thee
  Down here where our affection languishes,
It will no more be marvelous to me;
  For there where appetite is never wrong,
  I say in heaven, I made my boast of it.
Truly thou art a cloak soon shortening,
  So that, if naught be added day by day,
  Time will go round about thee with his shears.
With *You,* which Rome was first to tolerate,
  In which her family least perseveres,
  My words began again; and Beatrice,
Who was apart from us a little then,
  Smiling thereat, seemed like the one who coughed
  At the first fault written of Guenever.
"You are my father," I began to say,
  "You give me all my confidence to speak,
  You so uplift me, I am more than I.
Gladness is filling by so many streams
  My mind, that it makes of itself a joy,
  In that it can endure this and burst not.
May you then tell me, my dear forefather,
  Who were your ancestors, and what the years
  That were recorded in your boyhood's time.
Tell me about the sheepfold of Saint John,
  How large it was then, and who the people were
  Worthy to have the highest seats in it."
As at the breathing of the wind a coal
  Is quickened into flame, so I beheld
  That light glow brighter at my blandishments;
As to my eyes it grew more beautiful,

So with a voice more sweet and soft, but not
In modern utterance, he said to me:
"From that day when *Ave* was said until
The birth in which my mother, sainted now,
Was lightened of the burden I had been,
This fire had come five hundred, fifty times
And thirty to its Lion, that it there
Might reinflame itself beneath his paw.
My ancestors and I had our birth-place
Where the last ward is first encountered by
Him who is running in your annual games.
Let this thou hearest of my elders be
Enough; of who they were and whence they came
It is fitter to keep silence than discourse.
All those who at that time were able there
Between Mars and the Baptist to bear arms
Were as the fifth part of the living now.
The citizenry, though a mixture now
From Campi, from Certaldo and Fighine,
Was then seen pure in the lowest artisan.
Oh, how much better were it if the folk
That I have named were neighbors, and to have
Galleazzo and Trespiano at your bounds,
Than to have them within and bear the stench
Of Aguglione's churl, of Signa's, who
Already has eyes keen for barratry!
If that folk most degenerate on earth
Had been to Caesar not a step-mother
But kindly, as a mother to her son,
A money-changing, trading Florentine
New-made would be turned back to Simifonti
Where his grandfather went about and begged;
And Montemurlo would be still the Counts',
The Cerchi in Acone's parish still,

Perhaps the Buondelmonti in Valdigreve.
An intermingling made of persons ever
Was a beginning of the city's harm,
As in the body is superfluous food.
A blind bull is more headlong in his fall
Than the blind lamb; and many a time one sword
Does more and better cutting than the five.
If thou regard Luni and Urbisaglia,
How they have gone, and how are passing on
Chiusi and Sinigaglia after them;
To hear how families are undone will not
Appear to thee a novel thing nor hard,
Since even cities have their term of life.
Your things have all of them their death, even as
Yourselves, but it conceals itself in such
Of them as long endure; and lives are short.
And as the heaven of the moon revolves,
Covering, uncovering, without pause the shores,
Even so with Florence fortune deals; wherefore
Should not appear to thee a marvelous thing
What I shall tell of the high Florentines,
Of whom the fame is hidden by time. I saw
The Ughi, the Catellini, Filippi,
Greci, Ormanni, and Albertini, even
In their decline illustrious citizens.
And I saw these, as great as they were old,
With him of La Sannella, him of L'Arca,
And Soldanieri, and Ardinghi, and Bostichi.
Over the gate, which is at present laden
With such great weight of recent felony
That soon there will be jetsam from the bark,
The Ravignani dwelt, from whom descended
Is the Count Guido, and whoever since
Has taken on high Bellincione's name.

He of La Pressa knew already how
One needs to rule, and Galigaio had
Already hilt and pummel gilt at home.
The column of the Vaio was great already,
Sacchetti, Giuocchi, Fifanti and Barucci,
The Galli, and those the bushel makes to blush.
The stock whence the Calfucci sprang was great
Already, and the Sizii and Arrigucci
Had been already drawn to the curule chairs.
Oh, how great saw I those who are undone
By their own pride! And with all their great deeds
The balls of gold kept Florence flourishing.
So did the forefathers of those who now
Grow fat remaining in consistory
Whenever in your church the see is vacant.
The overweening stock, that dragon-like
Is at his heels who flees, but is a lamb
To him who shows his teeth, or purse forsooth,
Was coming up already, but of folk
So humble, Ubertin Donato grieved
When made their kinsman by his father-in-law.
Already Caponsacco had come down
From Fiesole to the market-place, and Giuda
And Infangato were good citizens.
I say a thing incredible and true:
You reached the little circle by a gate
To which those of La Pera gave the name.
Of those who bear the ensign beautiful
Of the great baron, whose renown and worth
The feast of Thomas reconfirms, each one
Received from him knighthood and privilege;
Although that one who binds it with a fringe
Is with the common people joined today.
The Gualterotti and Importuni throve

Already; Borgo were now quieter,
If from new neighbors they had kept a fast.
The house, from which was born your weeping, sprung
From righteous indignation that brought you
Your death, making your happy life to end,
Was honored, both itself and its allies.
O Buondelmonte, how wrongly thou didst flee
Its nuptials through another's counseling!
Happy would many be who now are sad,
If to the Ema God had yielded thee,
When to the city thou first mad'st thy way!
But it was due that mutilated stone
Which guards the bridge, that Florence offer it
A victim in her final days of peace.
With these and other families with them
Florence I saw in such repose, that she
Had no occasion why she should lament;
And with these families her populace
I saw so glorious and so just, the lily
Was never set reversed upon the staff
Nor through dissensions to vermilion changed."

CANTO XVII

As came to Clymene, that he might learn
Of that which he had heard against himself,
The one who still makes fathers to their sons
Reluctant,—such was I, and such was deemed
By Beatrice, and by the holy lamp
Which previously for me had changed its place.
Wherefore my Lady said to me: "Send forth
The flame of thy desire so that it come
Clearly impressed from the internal stamp;

Not that our knowledge may increase through that
Thou say'st, but that thou may'st accustom thee
To tell thy thirst, that one pour out for thee."
"O dear earth-spring of mine, who now dost so
Uplift thyself, thou seest contingent things,—
As earthly minds see that there can not be
Two angles of a triangle obtuse,—
Ere in themselves they are, while thou dost gaze
Upon the Point, to which all times are now;
While I was still in Virgil's company
Upward along the Mount which cures the souls,
And going downward in the world of death,
Grave words about the future of my life
Were said to me; although I feel myself
Truly four-square against the blows of chance.
Wherefore my will would be content to learn
What is the fortune drawing nigh for me,
For slower comes the arrow once foreseen."
Thus spoke I unto that same light which erst
To me had spoken, and as Beatrice
Had willed it, had my longing been confessed.
Not with ambiguous phrase, with which were limed
The foolish formerly, ere He was slain,
The Lamb of God, who takes away our sins,
But with clear words and with precise discourse
That love as of a father answered me,
Enclosed and manifest in its own smile:
"Contingency, which stretches not beyond
The volume of your things material,
Is all depicted in the Eternal Vision;
But yet from thence takes it necessity
No more than from the sight which mirrors it
A vessel which is going down the stream.
From That, as to the ear sweet harmony

Comes from an organ, comes to me the sight
Of times which now prepare themselves for thee.
As through his cruel, false step-mother's act
Hippolytus left Athens, even so
Must thou leave Florence. This is willed, this now
Is sought for, and will soon be brought to pass
By him whose mind is on it in that place
Where Christ is every day a merchandise.
The blame shall follow the defeated side
In outcry, as is wont; but vengeance shall
Bear witness to the Truth dispensing it.
Thou shalt leave everything which thou dost love
Most tenderly, and this shall be the bolt
Which by the bow of exile is shot first.
Thou shalt experience how salt the taste
Of others' bread, and how the path is hard
Descending and ascending others' stairs.
And what will load thy shoulders heaviest
Will be the evil, senseless company
With which thou art to fall into this vale;
Which all ingrates, all mad and furious,
Will turn against thee, but thereafter soon
Shall it, not thou, have temples red for that.
Of their bestiality their own procedure
Will give the proof; so that it well beseems
To make thyself a party by thyself.
The first refuge for thee and the first inn
Shall be of the great Lombard's courtesy
Who on the ladder bears the holy bird,
Who will hold thee in such benign regard,
That what is slowest done and asked between
All others shall be first between you two.
With him thou shalt see that one, who at birth
Received such impress from this mighty star,

That all his doings shall be notable.
Not yet have men become aware of him
Because of youthfulness; because these wheels
Have only through nine years around him turned.
But ere the Gascon cheat the lofty Henry
Some sparkles of his virtue shall appear
In unconcern for money and for toils.
And his magnificences shall be known
So well hereafter, that for them his foes
Will not be able to keep mute their tongues.
Look thou to him and to his benefits;
Through him shall many people be transformed,
Changing condition, rich and mendicant,
And thou shalt bear hence, written in thy mind
Of him, but shalt not tell it—"; and he said
Things past belief of those who shall be there.
Then added: "Son, these are interpretings
Of what was said to thee; behold the snares
Hidden behind few revolutions more.
Yet I would not that thou shouldst hold in hate
Thy neighbors, for thy life shall far outlast
The punishment of their perfidious deeds."
Since by its silence now the holy soul
Showed it had finished the inserted woof
Into the web I held out warped to it,
Then I began, like one who in his doubt
Has longing for the counsel of some one
Who sees, and wills straightforwardly, and loves:
"Clearly I see, my father, how the time
Is spurring toward me to give such a blow
As heaviest falls on him who most gives up;
So with foresight it is good to arm myself,
That, if the place most dear be taken from me,
I may not lose the others by my songs.

Down through the infinitely bitter world,
  And on the Mountain, from whose summit fair
  I was uplifted by my Lady's eyes,
And afterwards through heaven from light to light
  I have learned that which, if I tell again
  Will be to many of great bitterness;
And if to truth I am a timid friend,
  I fear the loss of living among those
  By whom these will be called the olden times."
The light in which my treasure, which I there
  Had found, was smiling, first began to flash,
  Like to a golden mirror in the sun;
And then replied: "A conscience that is dark,
  Be it for its own or for another's shame,
  Will feel, indeed, that what thou say'st is harsh;
But none the less, all falsehood laid aside,
  Make all thy vision manifest, and then
  Let there be scratching where the itching is;
For if thy voice at the first taste shall be
  A molestation, it will afterwards
  Digested leave a vital nourishment.
This cry of thine shall do as does the wind,
  Which beats the hardest on the highest peaks;
  And this shall be of honor no slight proof.
Hence have been shown to thee within these wheels,
  Upon the Mount, and in the dolorous vale,
  Only the souls which unto fame are known;
Because the mind of him who hears rests not,
  Nor by example that should have its root
  Unknown and hidden is his faith confirmed,
Nor yet by other unapparent proof."

CANTO XVIII

Now was enjoying only its own word
That blessed mirror, and I, tempering
The bitter with the sweet, was tasting mine,
When spoke that Lady, who was leading me
To God: "Change thou thy thought, think that I am
Near Him who lifts the load of every wrong."
I turned me at the loving sound of her,
My comfort, and what love I then beheld
Within the holy eyes I leave untold;
Not merely that I trust not words of mine,
But memory can not return so far
Above itself, unless another guide.
This can I of that moment still recount
That my affection as I gazed on her
From every other longing was set free,
While the Eternal Pleasure, whose ray fell
Direct on Beatrice, from her fair face
With the second aspect was contenting me.
The light of her smile overwhelming me,
She said to me: "Turn thou and listen, for
Not only in my eyes is Paradise."
As here the affection in the countenance
Is sometimes seen, if it be great enough
For the whole soul to be possessed by it,
So in the holy splendor's flaming light,
To which I turned, I recognized the will
In it to discourse with me still somewhat.
It said, beginning: "In this resting-place,
Fifth of the tree which from its top has life,
That bears fruit ever and sheds never leaf,
Are blessed spirits which below, before

They came to heaven, were of great renown
So that with them would any muse be rich.
Therefore gaze thou upon the arms of the cross; 34
The one whom I name there will do the act
That in a cloud is done by its swift fire."
At Joshua's name I saw along the cross 37
A light drawn out even as it was named,
Nor did I note the word before the deed.
And at the lofty Maccabeus' name 40
I saw another moving like a wheel,
And of that top the whip was happiness.
For Charlemagne and Roland thus my gaze 43
Intently followed two of them, as one
Follows his flying falcon with his eye.
And afterward my gaze was drawn along 46
That cross by William and by Renouard,
By the Duke Godfrey and Robert Guiscard.
Moving and mingling with the other lights 49
The soul that had addressed me showed me then
What artistry was his in heaven's choir.
I turned me round to my right side, that I 52
Might see in Beatrice what I should do,
Either by act betokened or by words;
And saw her eyes of such clear brilliancy, 55
So full of gladness that her countenance
Excelled her other and her latest wont.
And even as through feeling more delight 58
In his good works a man from day to day
Of his advance in virtue grows aware,
So I, seeing that Marvel more adorned, 61
Became aware that my revolving course
Along with heaven had increased its arc.
And like the change in little space of time 64
In a fair lady, when her face becomes

Relieved from burden of a sense of shame:
Such was there in my eyes, when I had turned,
In the pure whiteness of the temperate star,
The sixth, that had received me to itself.
I saw within that torch of Jupiter
The sparkling of the love existing there
Make to my eyes the tokens of our speech.
And even as birds when risen from the shore,
As if with one rejoicing for their food,
Make of themselves a troop, now round, now long,
So holy creatures there within the lights
Went singing as they flew, and made themselves
Now D, now I, now L in their own groups.
First, they moved singing to their melody;
Becoming then one of these characters,
A little while they waited silently.
O Pegasean goddess, who dost make
Men's wits renowned and renderest them long-lived,
And they with thee the cities and the realms,
Light me thyself, so that I may set forth
Their figures, as I have conceived of them;
In these brief verses let thy power appear!
For they displayed themselves in five times seven
Vowels and consonants, and I observed
The parts so as they seemed to me expressed;
Diligite justitiam the first
Of all the picture were, as verb and noun;
Qui judicatis terram were the last.
Then in the M of the fifth word they stayed
In their due order, so that Jupiter
Seemed to be silver there inlaid with gold.
And I saw other lights descend upon
The top of the M and there grow still and sing,
I think, the Good which moves them to Itself.

As on the striking of the burning logs
There rise innumerable sparks, wherefrom
The foolish use to draw an augury,
So there seemed then more than a thousand lights
To rise thence and to mount, some much, some little,
As was allotted by the enkindling sun;
And when each one had quieted itself
In its own place, an eagle's head and neck
I saw was figured by that inlaid fire.
He who paints there has no one guiding Him,
He guides; and from Him comes that to the mind
Which is the forming power for the nests;
The other blessedness, which seemd at first
Content to be enlilied on the M,
With little motion followed out the print.
What gems, and in what number, O sweet star,
Made plain to me that our own justice is
Effected by that heaven thou dost ingem!
Wherefore I pray the Mind in which begin
Thy motion and thy power, that it view whence
Issues the smoke that vitiates thy ray;
So that it now again be moved to wrath,
That in that temple men should buy and sell,
Whose walls were built of blood and martyrdoms.
O soldiery of heaven, on whom I gaze,
Pray ye for those who are upon the earth,
Following the bad example, all astray!
The use was once to war with swords; but now
They take away, now here, now there, the bread
The pitying Father would lock up from none;
But thou, who writest but to cancel it,
Think how are still alive Peter and Paul,
Who died for the vineyard that thou layest waste.
Well canst thou say: "I have my heart so set

On him who willed to live alone, and who
For dancing was brought forth to martyrdom,
That I know not the fisherman nor Paul." 136

CANTO XIX

THE beautiful image which the entwined souls
Were making, in their sweet fruition glad,
Appeared before me with its wings outstretched.
Each one appeared a ruby, which as it were 4
Burned with a ray of sunlight, so on fire
That it reflected it into my eyes.
And that which it befits me now to trace 7
Voice ne'er reported and ink never wrote,
Nor ever was it by the fancy grasped;
For I beheld and also heard the beak 10
To speak, and its voice utter "I" and "My,"
When in conception it was "We" and "Our."
"For being just and tender," it began, 13
"Am I exalted to the glory here
Which suffers not to be excelled by wish;
And on the earth the memory of me 16
Have I left such that there the evil folk
Commend it, but the story follow not."
As one heat only makes itself be felt 19
From many coals, so came from many loves
But one sound from that image issuing;
At which I said then: "O perpetual flowers 22
Of the eternal gladness, who to me
Make all your odors sweet seem but as one,
Breathing, give me release from that great fast 25
Which for so long has kept me hungering,
For I have found no food for it on earth.

Truly I know that if God's justice makes
  Its mirror of another realm in heaven,
  By yours it is apprehended with no veil.
Ye know with what attention I prepare
  To listen, and ye know what doubt it is
  That has become so old a fast to me."
Such as the falcon issuing from the hood,
  Which moves his head about and claps his wings,
  Meaning to show himself made beautiful,
Saw I that figure, woven of the praise
  Of Grace Divine, becoming with the songs
  Such as they know who there on high rejoice.
Then it began: "That One, whose compass swept
  The world's remotest bound, and marked within
  So much obscure and so much manifest,
Could not have made such imprint of His worth
  On all the universe, but that His word
  Should have remained in infinite excess.
And this makes plain that the first haughty one,
  Who was the height of all created things,
  Fell, as he would not wait for light, unripe;
Thence it appears that lesser natures all
  Are scant receptacles for boundless Good,
  Itself alone the measure of Itself.
Our vision then, which of necessity
  Is one ray of the Mind with which all things
  Are full to the uttermost, can not possess
Of its own nature such a power but that
  It should discern its Origin far on
  Beyond that which appears unto itself.
Therefore the sight, which your world has received
  Into eternal justice, penetrates
  Within as does the eye into the sea;
Which, though it see the bottom from the shore,

At sea beholds it not, which none the less
Is there, but hidden from him, being deep.
Light is not, save it come from the serene
That never clouds itself; nay, is darkness rather,
Or shadow of the flesh, or poison thence.
Open enough to thee is now the place,
Which hid the living justice, and whereof
Thou mad'st so frequent question; for thou saidst:
'A man is born upon the Indus' bank
Where there is no one who of Christ may tell,
Nor who may read nor who may write; and all
He wills to do and all his deeds are good,
As far as human reasoning perceives,
Without a sin in living or in speech;
And unbaptized and without faith he dies;
Where is this justice that condemns the man?
Where is his fault, if he does not believe?'
Now who art thou, that wouldst sit on the bench
To judge of aught a thousand miles away
With petty vision of a span in reach?
Surely for him who subtly deals with me,
If there were not the Scripture over you,
There would be room for doubting marvelously.
O earthly animals! O ye gross minds!
The Primal Will, which of Itself is good,
Moved never from Itself, the Supreme Good.
The just is what is consonant with It;
No good created draws It to itself,
But It by radiance is its very cause."
Like as the stork, when she has fed her young,
Goes circling in her flight above the nest
While that one who is fed looks up at her,
Even such became,—and so raised I my eyes,—
The blessed image, which moved now its wings

With impulse by so many counsels made.
Wheeling it sang, and said: "As are my notes
To thee, who dost not understand them, such
The eternal judgment is to mortal man."
After the Holy Spirit's glowing flames
Had quieted themselves, still in the sign,
Which made the Romans reverend to the world,
Thus it began again: "Unto this realm
No one has risen believing not in Christ,
Before or since they nailed Him to the cross.
But lo! many are they that cry Christ! Christ!
Who at the Judgment shall be much less near
To Him, than such an one who knows not Christ;
Christians like those the Ethiop shall condemn,
When the two companies shall separate,
The one forever rich, the other poor.
What shall the Persians say unto your kings
When they shall see the open book wherein
All their dispraises have been written down?
There shall be seen that one among the deeds
Of Albert, which shall soon make move the pen,
And make a desert of the realm of Prague.
There shall be seen the misery which he,
Who is to die by blow of a wild boar,
Brings on the Seine by coinage falsified.
There shall be seen the pride that whets the thirst
Which maddens Scot and Englishman alike
So that they can not keep within their bounds;
Seen the luxurious and effeminate life
Of him of Spain, and that Bohemian's
Who ne'er knew valor, nor desired to know;
Seen how the crippled of Jerusalem
Has with a single I his goodness marked,
Whereas the contrary is marked with M;

Seen both the avarice and cowardice
  Of him who guards the island of the fire
  Whereon Anchises ended his long life;
And to make clearly known his pettiness,
  The letters of his writing shall be small,
  And make a note of much in little space;
And plain to all appear the filthy deeds
  His uncle and his brother wrought, whose stock
  So famous and whose crowns they bastardized;
And he of Portugal shall be known there,
  And he of Norway, and of Rascia he,
  Who to his hurt looked on Venetian coin.
O happy Hungary, if she endure
  No longer to be harmed! Happy Navarre,
  If she shall arm her with her girding hills!
And all should know, in earnest of this end,
  That Nicosia and Famagosta now
  Lament and wail by reason of their beast
Which parts not from the others at his side."

CANTO XX

When that one who illumines all the world
  Is from our hemisphere descending, so
  That day in every quarter wastes away,
The heaven, enkindled erst by him alone,
  Makes itself suddenly appear again
  With many lights, in them reflecting one.
And this act of the heaven came to me
  In mind when now the ensign of the world
  And of its leaders in its blessed beak
Ceased utterance; for all those living lights,
  Gleaming more brightly far, commenced to sing
  Songs lapsing from my memory and lost.

Sweet Love, which with a smile dost cloak thyself,
How ardent thou appearedst in those flutes
Which had the breath of holy thoughts alone!
After the precious and resplendent stones,
With which I saw the sixth light was ingemmed,
Had brought to silence their angelic chimes,
I seemed to hear the murmuring of a stream,
That falls in limpid flow from rock to rock,
Showing the fulness of its lofty source.
As at the cithern's neck sound takes its form,
And at the vent-hole in the bagpipe's reed
The wind that is within it, even so
Delay of waiting being set aside,
That sound of murmuring arose within
The eagle's neck, as through a hollow space.
There it became a voice, and issued thence
From out its beak in form of words, such as
The heart awaited, where I wrote them down.
"The part in me which sees and bears the sun
In mortal eagles," it began to me,
"Must now be looked on fixedly, because
Among the fires of which I make my form,
Those of the eye which sparkles in my head
Are they who are supreme of all their grades.
He in the middle as the pupil shines
Who was the singer of the Holy Spirit
And brought the ark from city unto city;
Now knows he of the merit of his song,
How far it was the effect of his design,
By the rewarding, which is like to it.
Of five who make a circle as my brow,
The one who is the nearest to my beak
Consoled the grieving widow for her son;
Now knows he at how dear a cost it is,

Not following Christ, by the experience
Of this sweet life and of its opposite.
And he, the next on the circumference
Of which I speak, upon the upper arc,
By a true penitence delayed his death;
Now knows he that the eternally decreed
Is not transmuted when a worthy prayer
Makes there tomorrow's that which was today's.
The next who follows, with the laws and me,—
With good intention that bore evil fruit,—
Made himself Greek to give the pastor room;
Now knows he how the ill from his good deed
Deduced, is not injurious to him,
Although thereby the world should be destroyed.
And he, whom on the sloping arc thou seest,
Was William, whom that land deplores, which sheds
Its tears for Charles and Frederick alive;
Now knows he how the ardent love of heaven
Is given the righteous king, and to the view
In his effulgency still makes it seen.
Who would believe down in the erring world
The Trojan Rhipeus to be here, the fifth
Upon the circle of these holy lights?
Now knows he much of what the world has not
The power to behold of grace divine,
Although his sight may not discern the depth."
Like to the lark that goes her way in air,
Singing at first, then silences her voice
Content, with her last sweetness satisfied,
Such seemed to me the image of the imprint
Of the Eternal Pleasure, at the will
Of Whom each thing becomes that which it is.
And although there I was unto my doubt
Like glass unto the color which it clothes,

It could not, silent, bear to bide its time, [forth
But from my mouth: "What things are these?" urged
By force of its own weight; and thereupon
I saw great festal joy of flashing light.
Then all at once with eye enkindled more
The blessed ensign made reply to me,
Not to keep me in wondering suspense:
"I see that these things are believed by thee,
Because I tell them, but thou seest not how;
And so are hidden, though they are believed.
Thou dost as one who apprehends indeed
A thing by name; whereas its quiddity
He can not see, if some one show it not.
Regnum coelorum suffers violence
From ardent love, and from a lively hope
Which vanquishes the will of God; but not
In such wise as man overmasters man,
But vanquishes, for vanquished it would be,
And vanquished, vanquishes benignantly.
The first life of the eyebrow and the fifth
Cause thee to see and marvel that with them
The region of the angels is adorned.
They came not from their bodies, as thou deem'st,
Gentiles, but Christians, trusting firmly in
The Feet that suffered, or should suffer yet.
The one came back unto his bones from Hell,
Where there is ne'er returning to good will,—
And this was a reward of lively hope;
Of lively hope that lent its power to prayers
Made unto God, that he might be raised up,
So that his will might have the power to move.
The glorious soul, of which these words are spoken,
Returning to the flesh briefly sojourned,
And put its faith in Him with power to help;

And in believing burned with so great flame
Of a true love, that at the second death
It fitly came to this festivity.
The other, by the grace which from a spring
Wells up, so deep that no created eye
Has ever reached so far as its first wave,
Set all his love below on righteousness;
So God, from grace to grace, opened his eyes
On our redemption that was yet to be;
Wherefore believing in it, from that time
He bore the stench of paganism no more,
Rebuking the perverse because of it.
To him for baptism were those Ladies three
Whom thou saw'st near the wheel upon the right,
Before baptizing a full thousand years.
Oh, how remote, predestination, is
Thy root from sight of those who do not see
The Primal Cause in its entirety!
And do ye, mortals, keep yourselves restrained
In passing judgment; for to us who look
On God, are all the chosen not yet known;
And sweet to us is this deficiency,
For our good is perfected in this good,
That what is willed of God we also will."
In such wise by that image so divine,—
That my short sight might be made clear for me,—
Given to me was a sweet medicine.
As a good lutanist accompanies
One singing well with quivering of the strings,
Whereby the song acquires more pleasantness;
So, while it spoke, as I recall to mind,
Did I behold the blessed lights of both,
Just as the winking of the eyes agrees,
With flamelets set in motion to the words.

CANTO XXI

ALREADY on my Lady's countenance
My eyes were fixed again, with them my mind
That from all other objects had withdrawn;
And she was smiling not, but thus to me
Began: "If I should smile, thou wouldst become
What Semele became, to ashes turned;
Because my beauty which along the stairs
Of the eternal palace kindles more,
As thou hast seen, the higher it ascends,
Glows, if untempered, so resplendently,
Before its brilliancy thy mortal power
Would be as foliage that the thunder blasts.
To the seventh splendor are we lifted up,
That underneath the Lion's burning breast
Now radiates downward, mingled with his strength.
Fix thou thy mind on following thine eyes,
And let them mirrors for the figure be
Which in this mirror to thee shall appear."
He who should know the feasting of my eyes,
What sort it was, upon that blessed sight,
When I transferred me to another care,
Would know the pleasure that I felt to yield
Obedience to my celestial guide,
Were he to counterpoise this side with that.
Within the crystal circling round the world,
Bearing the name of its illustrious leader,
Beneath whose sway all wickedness lay dead,
Colored like gold on which the sunlight falls,
I saw a ladder stretching up so far
That with my eyes I could not follow it.
I saw, besides, descending by its steps

So many splendors that I thought all light
That shines in heaven was poured down from it.
And as, their natural custom following,
The daws together at the break of day
To warm their chilly feathers move about;
Then some will go away without return,
Others come back to whence they started forth,
And some continue in their wheeling flight:
Such seemed to me to be the manner here,
As it collected, of that sparkling light
As soon as it had reached a certain step;
And that one which kept nearest us, became
So bright that I was saying in my thought:
"I see indeed the signal of thy love;
But she, on whom I wait to learn the how
And when of speech and silence, moves not; so,
Against desire, it is well that I ask not."
But as she in the sight of Him, who sees
All things, had seen the silence that I kept,
She said to me: "Let loose thy warm desire!"
And I began: "It is not my desert
That makes me worthy of thine answering,
But for her sake, who granted that I ask,
O blessed life, who dost abide concealed
Within thy joy, do thou make known to me
The cause which has brought thee so near my side;
And tell me wherefore silent in this wheel
Is the sweet symphony of Paradise,
Which so devoutly sounds through those below."
"Thou hast thy hearing mortal, as thy sight,"
It answered me; "one is the cause that here
There is no song and Beatrice smiles not.
The holy ladder's steps have I come down
So far that I might solely give thee joy

Of speech and of the light that mantles me;
Nor was I swifter through a greater love,
For up there love as great and greater burns,
Even as the flaming manifests to thee;
But the deep charity, which makes us prompt
To serve the counsel governing the world,
As thou observest, makes allotment here."
"Clearly I see, O Sacred Lamp," said I,
"How a free love suffices in this court
For following the eternal Providence;
But this it is seems hard for me to grasp,
Why thou among thy consorts wast alone
Predestined to the office that thou hast."
I had not come to uttering my last word
Before its middle part the light had made
A centre, whirling with a mill-stone's speed.
And then the love within it made reply:
"A light divine is falling upon me
And pierces this, where I am at the heart;
The power of which, combining with my sight,
Lifts me above myself so far, I see
The Supreme Essence, from which it is drawn.
Thence comes the joy wherewith I flame; because
According to my sight, as that is clear,
I show an equal clearness in my flame.
But even that most enlightened soul in heaven,
The Seraph with his eye most fixed on God,
Would fail of satisfying thy demand;
For that which thou dost ask in the abyss
Of the Eternal Statute lies so deep,
It is cut off from all created sight.
When thou returnest to the mortal world,
Carry this back, so that it may no more
Presume to move its feet toward such a goal.

On earth the mind is smoky which shines here;
  Consider, then, how can it do below
  What it can not, though heaven take it up."
Such were the bounds prescribed me by its words,
  That I ceased questioning, and drew me back
  To ask it, humbly minded, who it was.
"Between the two Italian shores rise rocks,—
  And not far distant from thy native land,—
  So high, the thunders sound far lower down,
And form a ridge called Catria, on whose slope
  There is a consecrated hermitage
  That was for worship only set apart."
Thus it began again the third discourse;
  And then it said as it continued: "There
  I gave myself so firmly to serve God,
That merely with the food of olive juice
  I easily endured the heat and cold,
  Contented in my contemplative thoughts.
Of old that cloister rendered to these heavens
  Abundantly, but it is empty now,
  As presently must be perforce revealed.
In that place was I Peter Damian;
  Our Lady's house by the Adriatic shore
  Knew me as Peter, named the Sinner, too.
But little mortal life was left to me
  When I was called and dragged toward the hat,
  Which ever is transferred from bad to worse.
Lean and unshod came Cephas, as he came,
  That mighty vessel of the Holy Spirit,
  Taking the food of whatsoever inn.
Now will they have one propping on each side,
  The modern pastors, and one leading them,
  So heavy now, and one hold up their trains.
Their mantles cover up their palfreys so

That two beasts move under a single hide.
O Patience, that endurest, oh, so much!"
At this voice I beheld more flamelets come,
From step to step descending, and whirl round,
And every whirl made them more beautiful.
About this one they came and there remained,
And cried with such deep sound, none here could be
Compared with it; nor could I understand it,
The thundering had overcome me so.

CANTO XXII

Oppressed with my amazement, to my guide
I turned me, as a child runs always back
Thither where he has greatest confidence;
And she was like a mother who gives help
At once to her pale, breathless son with voice
That has been wont to comfort him, and said
To me: "Knowest thou not thou art in heaven?
That heaven is all holy knowest thou not,
And that the deeds done here come from good zeal?
What change in thee the singing would have wrought,
And I by smiling, thou canst now conceive,
Since by their cry thou wast so deeply moved;
In which, if thou hadst understood their prayers,
Already were the vengeance known to thee,
Which thou shalt see before thou come to die.
The sword of here on high cuts not in haste,
Nor tardily, save as it seems to him
Awaiting it in his desire or fear.
But turn thou now about toward the others,
For most illustrious spirits shalt thou see,
If, as I say, thou but turn back thy gaze."

With eyes directed as pleased her, I saw
A hundred little spheres together gain
A greater beauty by their mutual rays.
I stood as one repressing in himself
The point of his desire, not venturing
To ask, so greatly does he fear excess.
And when the largest and most luminous
Moved itself forward from among those pearls
To satisfy my wish about itself,
I heard within it: "If thou couldst behold,
As I do now, the charity which burns
Among us here, thy thoughts would be expressed;
But lest thou, waiting, shouldst be slow to reach
The lofty end, even unto thy thought,
Of which thou art so cautious, I reply.
That mountain on whose slope Cassino lies,
Was formerly frequented on its top
By a deceived and evil-minded folk.
And I am he, who first bore to that height
The name of Him, who brought down to the earth
The truth which so sublimely raises us;
And grace with such abundance shone on me,
That the surrounding towns I drew away
From impious worship that seduced the world.
These other fires were all contemplatives,
Enkindled by that heat which brings to birth
The flowers and the fruits of sanctity.
Macarius and Romualdus both are here,
Here are my brothers, who confined their steps
Within the cloisters and kept sound their hearts."
And I to him: "The affection, which thou showest
Speaking with me, and the benevolence
I seem to see and note in all your fires,
Within me so expands my confidence

As sunlight does the rose when, opening,
She has become all she has power to be;
Wherefore I pray thee, let me, Father, know
If I may be recipient of such grace
That I may see thee with a form unveiled."
Whereon he said: "Brother, thy high desire
Shall be fulfilled in that last sphere on high,
Where are fulfilled all others and my own;
There perfect and mature, and lacking naught
Is all desiring; in that sphere alone
Is every part there where it always was,
For it is not in space and has not poles;
Our ladder reaches even up to it,
And hence thus from thy vision steals away.
Even so high Jacob, the patriarch,
Beheld it stretching to its topmost part
When angels seemed to him to load it so.
But there is now no one that lifts his feet
From earth that he may mount it, and my rule
Remains below to spoil the folios.
The walls that used to be an abbey, now
Are turned to dens, and the monastic robes
Become as sacks replete with wretched flour.
But heavy usury is levied not
So much against God's pleasure as that fruit
Which works such madness in the monkish heart.
For whatsoever by the Church is kept,
Is wholly theirs who ask it in God's name,
And not for kinsmen, nor for others worse.
The flesh of mortals has a softness such
That good beginning lasts not there below
From springing of the oak till acorns form.
Peter began with gold and silver none,
And I myself with fasting and with prayers,

And Francis humbly his society.
And if thou seest how each of these commenced, 91
Then seest further whither it has strayed,
Thou wilt observe that white is turned to black.
Truly would be the Jordan driven back, 94
And the sea fleeing when God willed it so,
More wonderful to view than succor here."
Thus spoke he to me, and then drew him back 97
Unto his company, and that closed up;
Then all together like a whirlwind rose.
And the sweet Lady merely with a sign 100
Impelled me up that ladder in their train,
My nature by her power overcome.
But here below where men mount and descend 103
By natural law, was motion ne'er so swift
That it could be compared unto my wing.
So may I, reader, yet return to those 106
Devoutly triumphing, for sake of which
I often weep for sin and beat my breast,
Thou hadst not moved thy finger back and forth 109
Through flame so quickly as I saw the sign
That follows Taurus, and had entered it.
O glorious stars, O light impregnated 112
Of virtue great, whence I acknowledge came
My genius wholly, whatsoe'er it is,
With you was rising and would hide with you 115
He who is father of each mortal life,
When first I felt the air of Tuscany;
And then, when grace was given me to go 118
Within the lofty wheel that whirls you round,
Your region of it was allotted me.
To you devoutly now breathes her desire 121
My soul for acquisition of the power
For that hard pass which draws her to itself.

"Thou art to the Ultimate Salvation risen
So near," thus Beatrice began, "that thou
Shouldst have thine eyes both clarified and keen.
And therefore, ere thou enter farther in,
Look backward, down, and see how great a world
I have already put beneath thy feet;
So that thy heart in fulness of its joy
Present itself to the triumphant throng,
Through this round ether coming in its bliss."
Backward I turned my sight through each and all
The seven spheres, and I beheld this globe
Such that I smiled at its appearance mean;
And I approve that counsel as the best
Which holds it least in worth; righteous indeed
May he be called who thinks of other things.
I saw Latona's daughter bathed in light
Without the shadow that had been the cause
Why once I deemed her to be rare and dense.
The aspect of thy son, O Hyperion,
Here I endured, and moving on their round
Saw Maia and Dione near to him.
From there appeared to me the tempering power
Of Jove between his father and his son;
And there was clear the varying of their place.
And all the seven showed themselves to me,—
How great they are and how exceeding swift,
And how far separated their abodes.
To me, revolving with the eternal Twins,
The little threshing-floor, which renders us
So fierce, lay all in view from hills to shores.
To her eyes beautiful then turned I mine.

CANTO XXIII

As the bird rests among the branches loved
  Upon the nest of her sweet little ones
  Throughout the night that hides all things from us,
And then, that she may see their longed-for looks, 4
  And find the food to still their hungering,
  In which the heavy tasks are her delight,
Forestalls the time upon the open twig, 7
  And ardent with desire awaits the sun,
  Fixedly watching for the birth of dawn:
So was my Lady standing now erect, 10
  Attentive, and toward that region turned
  'Neath which the sun displays a lessened haste,
So that, beholding her in this suspense 13
  And longing, I became as one whose wish
  Seeks some new thing and is appeased with hope.
But brief the time between that *when* and this, 16
  Of my expecting, say I, and my sight
  Of heaven growing bright and brighter still.
And Beatrice to me: "Behold the hosts 19
  Of the Triumphant Christ, and all the fruit
  Borne by the revolution of these spheres."
It seemed to me her face was all aglow, 22
  And in her eyes fulness of joy so great,
  That I, perforce, must leave it undescribed.
As, when the moon is full and clear the sky, 25
  Trivia smiles among the eternal nymphs,
  Who paint the heaven throughout all its depths,
I saw above the myriads of lamps 28
  A Sun, enkindling each and all of them,
  As does our own the spectacle on high,
And through its living light was shining down 31

The lucent Substance in such brilliancy
Upon my face that I sustained it not.
O Beatrice, sweet and beloved Guide! 34
She said to me: "That overwhelming thee
Is virtue, against which is no defence.
The Wisdom and the Power that opened wide 37
The paths to heaven from the earth is here,
Of which there was such long desire of old."
As fire from cloud unlocks itself, because, 40
Expanding so, it can not be contained,
And 'gainst its nature downward falls to earth:
Even so had then my mind amid those feasts 43
Becoming greater issued from itself,
And can not summon back what it became.
"Open thine eyes, and look on what I am; 46
Such things hast thou beheld, thou hast become
Of strength sufficient to sustain my smile."
I was as one who comes to consciousness 49
From a forgotten vision, and who tries
In vain to bring it back to mind, when I
Had heard this invitation, that deserves 52
Such gratitude as never from the book
That registers the past can be effaced.
If all those tongues that Polyhymnia 55
Together with her sisters made to be
The richest with their sweetest milk, were now
To sound to aid me, not the thousandth part 58
Of truth were reached, singing the holy smile
And how it made the holy face resplendent.
And thus, depicting Paradise, must needs 61
The sacred poem now move on by bounds,
Even as one who finds his way cut off.
But whoso thinks upon the ponderous theme 64
And on the mortal shoulder with its load,

Would not reproach it, if thereunder trembling.
It is no voyage for a little bark,
This which the daring prow goes cleaving, nor
For boatman who is sparing of himself.
"Why with my face art thou enamoured so
As not to turn to that fair garden, which
Beneath the rays of Christ is blossoming?
Here is the rose, in which the Word Divine
Made Itself flesh; and here the lilies are,
By whose sweet odor the good way was taken."
Thus Beatrice; and I, in readiness
Completely for her counseling, again
Entered the battle of the feeble brows.
As in a beam of sunlight that streams clear
Through rifted cloud, my shadow-covered eyes
Have seen ere now a field of flowers, so,
Many a throng of splendors I beheld
Bright with a burning radiance from on high,
Without the source of brightness being seen.
Benignant Power which thus imprintest them,
On high didst Thou uplift Thyself to grant
Scope to the eyes that there were powerless.
The name of that fair flower which I invoke
Ever at morn and eve wholly constrained
My mind to gaze upon the greater fire.
And when was painted on my eyes the kind
And greatness of that living star which there
Conquers as it has conquered here below,
From the mid-heaven there came down a torch,
Formed in a round in fashion of a crown,
Engirding her within its circling sweep.
Whatever melody sounds sweetest here
Below, and to itself most draws the soul,
Would seem but thunder of a rended cloud

Compared to the resounding of that lyre
With which was crowned the sapphire beautiful,
Wherewith ensapphired is the brightest heaven.
"I am Angelic Love, and circle round
The exalted joy that breathes forth from the womb
That was the hostelry of our desire;
And I shall circle, Lady of Heaven, until
Thy Son thou follow, and make more divine
The highest sphere, because thou enterest it."
Thus had the circling melody ensealed
Itself, and all the other lights were now
Making the name of Mary to resound.
Of all the revolutions of the world
The royal mantle, most on fire and most
Enlivened with the breath and laws of God,
Had at so great a distance over us
Its inner shore, that where I was it had
Not yet made its appearance to my view.
Therefore my eyes were lacking in the power
To follow after the encrownèd flame,
Which raised itself to be beside her Seed.
And as a babe, when it has fed upon
Its mother's milk, holds out its arms to her
In love that even outwardly flames up:
So did those splendors upward stretch themselves,
Each with his flame, that their exalted love
Of Mary was made manifest to me.
Then they remained there in my sight and sang
Regina coeli with a sweetness such,
The charm of it has never gone from me.
Oh, what abundant wealth is there piled up
Within those most rich coffers, that were once
Good husbandmen in sowing here below!
Here live they, joying in a treasure gained

In Babylonian exile as they wept
And where the gold was left aside by them.
Here triumphs under the exalted Son
Of God and Mary, in his victory,
With both the ancient council and the new,
He who of so great glory holds the keys.

CANTO XXIV

"O YE who are the fellowship elect
To the great supper of the Blessed Lamb,
Who so feeds you, your wish is e'er fulfilled,
As by the grace of God this man foretastes
Of that which from your table falls, before
A time has been prescribed to him by death,
Give heed to his immeasurable desire;
Bedew him somewhat; ye drink ever of
The Fountain, whence comes that of which he thinks."
Thus Beatrice; and those rejoicing souls
Became as spheres on fixèd poles that turn,
Flaming as with the comet's brilliancy.
And like the clock-work's wheels, that so revolve
That to one giving heed the first appears
To be at rest, the outermost to fly,
These carols, differently dancing, so
Caused me to have opinion of their wealth
As they were in their motion swift and slow.
One I had noted as most beautiful,
And thence I saw a fire so happy come
That none of greater brightness there remained;
And it revolved three times round Beatrice
With so divine a song that fantasy
Repeats it not to me; therefore my pen

O'erleaps it, and I write it not, because
Imagination and much more our speech,
Is of too vivid color for such folds.
"O holy sister mine, whose prayer of us
Is so devout, by thine affection's fire
From bonds of that fair sphere thou freest me."
For, having ceased to move, the blessed fire
Directed to my Lady thereupon
The breath whose words were such as I have said.
And she: "Eternal light of that great man,
To whom our Lord bequeathed the keys, that He
Had borne below, of this amazing joy,
Put this man to the test on points both light
And grave, as shall please thee, about the faith,
Through which thyself didst walk upon the sea.
If he loves rightly, rightly hopes, believes,
It is not hidden from thee, for thou hast
Thy sight where everything is seen portrayed.
But as this kingdom has made citizens
Through the true faith, to set its glory forth
It is well that speaking of it fall to him."
As when the bachelor arms himself,—and speaks
First when the master has set forth the case,—
To bring the proof and not to settle it:
So I with every reason armed myself
While she yet spoke, to be prepared for such
A questioner and for professing thus.
"Tell me, good Christian, manifest thyself:
Faith, what is it?" Whereon I raised my brow
Toward the light from which this had been breathed;
Then turned I me to Beatrice, and she
Made quickly signals to me that I pour
The water forth from my internal fount.
"The grace which grants that I confess myself

Before the chief centurion," I began,
"Cause my conceptions to be well expressed!"
And I went on: "As the veracious pen
Of thy dear brother, who with thee put Rome
On the right pathway, Father, wrote of it,
Faith is the substance of the things hoped for
And evidence of those not seen; and this
Appears to me its essence." Then I heard:
"Thou thinkest rightly, if thou comprehend
Why he first placed it with the substances,
And with the evidences afterwards."
And I thereon continued: "The deep things,
That grant me visible appearance here,
Are so concealed from sight of those below,
That they exist there to belief alone,
On which is founded the exalted hope,
And takes the name of substance on that ground;
And it behoves us thus from this belief
To syllogize, lacking in other sight;
Therefore it takes the name of evidence."
And then I heard: "If whatsoe'er is won
Below as doctrine were thus understood,
The sophist's cunning would have no place there."
Such was the breath from that enkindled love;
It added then: "Gone over very well
Already is this coin's alloy and weight;
But tell me if thou hast it in thy purse?"
Whereon I: "Yes, I have, so bright and round
That of its stamp I have no doubt at all."
Then from the deep light that was glowing there
Came forth: "This precious jewel, upon which
Is founded every virtue, whence came it
To thee?" And I: "The Holy Spirit's rain
That is abundant, and that is outpoured

Upon the parchments, both the Old and New,
Is argument convincing me thereof
With such acuteness, that compared with it
All demonstration seems obtuse to me."
Then heard I: "That which is such proof to thee,
The ancient proposition and the new,
Why holdest thou them for divine discourse?"
And I: "The proof that shows their truth to me
Is works that followed, for which Nature never
Her iron heated nor her anvil beat."
It was replied to me: "Tell me what makes
Thee sure that these works were? The very thing
That shall be proved, naught else, swears it to thee."
"If without miracles," said I, "the world
Was turned to Christianity, this one
Is such, the others were no hundredth part;
For thou didst enter, poor and hungering,
Into the field, to sow the goodly plant,
That was a vine, but turned a bramble now."
When this was ended, the high, holy court
Resounded through its spheres a *Praise we God*
In the melody that in those heights is sung.
That Baron, who had thus from branch to branch,
Examining, already drawn me on
Until we were approaching the last leaves,
Began again: "The Grace that with thy mind
Holds friendly in her course, has until now
Opened thy lips as it should open them,
Even so that I approve what they put forth;
But now what thou believest shalt thou state,
And how it comes to be of thy belief."
"O holy Father, spirit who dost see
What thou believedst so that thou outdidst
The younger feet toward the sepulchre,"

Began I, "thou wilt that I here declare
The form of my unhesitating faith,
And also hast thou asked the cause of it;
And I respond: In one God I believe,
Sole and eternal, who moves all the heavens,
Himself not moved, with love and with desire.
And for such faith have I not only proofs
Both physical and metaphysical,
But too that given me by the truth that rains [Psalms,
Through Moses down, through Prophets, and through
Through the Evangel, and through you who wrote
After the fiery Spirit made you divine.
And in three Persons I believe, eternal,
And these one Essence, one and three-fold so
That it admits of *are* and *is* conjoined.
Of the profound divine condition, which
I touch upon, sets on my mind its seal
The evangelic doctrine many times.
And this is the beginning, this the spark,
Which afterwards expands to vivid flame,
Within me sparkling like a star in heaven."
Even as a lord, who hears what pleases him,
Rejoicing in the news, embraces then
His servant, soon as he has ceased to speak:
Thus, giving me his blessing as he sang,
When I was silent thrice encircled me
The apostolic light, at whose command
I spoke; so had I pleased him in my speech.

CANTO XXV

If e'er it happen that the sacred poem,
To which both heaven and earth have so put hand,
That it has made me lean for many years,

O'ercome the cruelty that bars me out
Of the fair sheepfold, where a lamb I slept,
Foe to the wolves that wage their war on it;
With other voice thenceforth, with other fleece,
Will I go back a poet, and will then
On my baptismal font receive the crown;
For there into the faith I entered, which
Makes known the souls to God, and for its sake
Had Peter then encircled thus my brow.
Following that, there moved a light toward us
From out that sphere whence issued the first-fruit
That Christ left of His vicars after Him.
And full of joy my Lady said to me:
"Look, look! Behold the Baron, for whose sake
Galicia there below is visited."
As when a dove alights beside his mate
And each one to the other manifests,
Circling and cooing, his affection, so
Beheld I how each great Prince glorious
Was welcomed by the other, as they praised
The food of their partaking there on high.
But when their gratulation was completed,
Silently, *coram me,* each one stood still,
So blazing that it overcame my face.
And thereupon, smiling, said Beatrice:
"Illustrious life, through whom the bounteousness
Of our basilica is written, make
This height re-echo with the voice of hope;
Thou figurest it, thou knowest, as many times
As Jesus showed most brightness to the three."
"Lift up thy head, and be thou reassured;
For that which hither from the mortal world
Ascends, must needs be ripened in our rays."
This comfort from the second fire was mine;

And to the hills I lifted up mine eyes,
Which bowed them down before with too great weight.
"Since now by grace it is our Emperor's will
That thou before thy death stand face to face
In the most secret chamber with his counts,
So that, the truth of this court seen, thereby
Thou mayst confirm thine own and others' hope,
Which there below enamours rightfully;
Say what it is, and how within thy mind
It comes to flower, and whence it came to thee."
Thus spoke, continuing, the second light.
And that compassionate one, who guided then
The feathers of my wings for flight so high,
Thus answering, anticipated me:
"There is no child of the Church Militant
Possessed of greater hope, as it is written
Within the Sun, that shines on all our band;
Therefore it is granted him that he should come
From Egypt to Jerusalem to see,
Before for him the warfare terminate.
The two remaining points, which are called for,
Not for the learning but so that he may
Report how much this virtue pleases thee,
To him I leave; for they will not be hard,
Nor cause of boasting; let him answer them,
And may the grace of God grant this to him!"
As pupil follows teacher, readily
And glad in that in which he is expert,
If so his quality be brought to light:
"Hope," said I, "is an expectation sure
Of glory that shall be, which is produced
By grace divine and merit that precedes.
From many stars does this light come to me;
But he into my heart instilled it first,

Singer supreme of Him, the Guide Supreme.
For in his theody he says: '*Sperent* 73
In te who know Thy name;' and who is there
That knows it not, if he has faith like mine?
To his instilling didst thou add thine own 76
In thine Epistle later, so that I
Am full, and upon others shower your rain."
While I still spoke, within the living bosom 79
Of that great fire was quivering a blaze,
Sudden and frequent, like the lightning's flash.
Then breathed it forth: "The love with which I still 82
Am glowing toward the virtue, which kept on
With me to the palm and leaving of the field,
Wills that I breathe again to thee, who dost 85
Delight in it; and I were pleased, if thou
Wouldst speak of what Hope promises to thee."
And I: "The Scriptures Old and New set up 88
The mark of souls whom God has made His friends,
And this it is that points that out to me.
Isaiah says that every one shall be 91
In his own land with double garment clothed,
And his own land shall be this joyous life;
And with far greater fulness has been made 94
This revelation manifest to us
There where thy brother of the white robes treats."
And closely following these words, at first 97
Sperent in te above us could be heard,
To which the carols all made their response;
Then in their midst a light became so bright 100
That, had the Crab but one such crystal, then
Would winter have a month of one sole day.
And as will rise and go and join the dance 103
A happy maiden, only that she may
Honor the bride, and not for any wrong:

So I beheld the brightened splendor come
Toward the two, who like a wheel revolved,
As well accorded with their ardent love.
It joined there in the measure and the song;
And upon them my Lady kept her gaze,
Even as a bride, silent and motionless.
"This is the one, who lay upon the breast
Of Him, our Pelican, and he it was
From on the cross to the great office chosen."
My Lady thus; nor any more did she
Remove the fixed attention of her look
After her words, for that cause, than before.
Like one who gazes and applies himself
To see the sun a little in eclipse
And through his seeing comes to see no more:
Such had I grown to be at this last fire,
Till it was said: "Why dazzlest thou thyself
To see a thing which here has not its place?
Earth is my body upon earth, and bides
There with the others till our number be
With the eternal purpose equalized.
With the two robes in the blest cloister are
The two lights only that went up on high;
And this thou shalt report unto your world."
At this voice came to rest the flaming whirl
Together with the sweet commingled sound
That had been uttered by the three-fold breath,
Even as when, to end fatigue or risk,
The oars, that beat the water back but now,
All stop their motion at the whistle's sound.
And oh, in what commotion was my mind
When I had turned to look on Beatrice,
Because I could not see her, though I was
Close at her side and in the world of bliss!

CANTO XXVI

WHILE I still feared because of my quenched sight,
From the effulgent flame that quenched it came
A breath which made me give attentive heed,
Saying: "Until thou gain again the sense
Of sight, which thou hast upon me consumed,
It is well that thou with converse fill its place.
Do thou commence, then, and tell whither tends
Thy soul; and be assured the power of sight
In thee is overwhelmed and is not dead;
Because the Lady, who through this divine
Region is guiding thee, has in her look
The virtue Ananias' hand possessed."
I said: "At her own pleasure, soon or late,
Be cured the eyes that were the gates where she
Came in with the fire, wherewith I ever burn!
The Good that makes this court content is both
Alpha and Omega of whatsoe'er
Of scripture Love reads me, softly or loud."
The self-same voice that took away from me
Fear of the sudden dazzling, placed on me
The care of further speaking, and it said:
"Surely with sieve of finer mesh must thou
Needs do the sifting; thou hast need to say
Who made thy bow at such a target aim."
And I: "By philosophic arguments
And by authority come down from here
Such love must needs impress itself on me;
For good, as being good, is grasped no sooner
But it enkindles love, and so much more
As it has more of goodness in itself.
Hence, to the Being so pre-excellent

That every good which is outside of It
Is but a beam of Its own radiance,
More than to any other must the mind
Of each one who discerns the truth whereon
This argument is based, be moved in love.
This truth is made plain to my intellect
By him who proves to me the primal love
Of all the sempiternal substances.
The voice of the true Author makes it plain,
Who says to Moses, speaking of Himself:
'All goodness will I cause thee to behold.'
Thou, too, dost make it plain to me, beginning
The high announcement which proclaims below
Above all other trump, that hidden here."
And I heard: "Through intelligence of man
And through authorities in unison
The highest of thy ~~laws~~ looks unto God.
But tell me further if thou feel besides
Cords drawing thee toward Him, that thou mayst thus
Say with how many teeth this love bites thee."
The holy purpose of Christ's Eagle thus
Was not obscure; nay, rather, I perceived
Whither he would that my profession tend.
Therefore again began I: "All those bites
That have the power to turn the heart to God
Have been concurrent to the love in me;
For the existence of the world, and mine,
The death that He endured that I may live,
And that which all the faithful hope as I,
With the aforenamed lively consciousness,
Had drawn me from the sea of wrongful love,
And of the right have set me on the shore.
The leaves, with which enleaved is all the garden
Of the Eternal Gardener, love I

According to the good He bears to them."
As soon as I had ceased, a song most sweet
Resounded through the heavens, and my Lady
Said with the others: "Holy! Holy! Holy!"
And as at a keen light one breaks his sleep,
Because the visual spirit runs to meet
The splendor that goes on from coat to coat,
And he, awakened, shrinks from what he sees,
So void of thought his sudden wakening,
Until discernment come to succor him:
So from my eyes was every mote expelled
By Beatrice with radiance of her own,
Which cast their light more than a thousand miles;
So that I then saw better than before,
And like one who is in a stupor, asked
About a fourth light which I saw with us.
And then my Lady: "There within those rays
With joy looks on its Maker the first soul
Ever created by the Primal Power."
As at the passing of the wind a branch
Will bend its top, and afterwards will raise
Itself, by its own virtue lifted up,
So had I done while she was speaking thus,
In my amazement; then a wish to speak,
With which I burned, restored my confidence;
And I began: "O fruit, that wast alone
Produced mature, O ancient Sire, to whom
Is every bride a daughter and daughter-in-law;
With all devotion thee I supplicate
That thou wilt speak to me; thou seest my wish,
Unsaid, that I may hear thee speedily."
Sometimes an animal when covered up
So twists that its desire must needs appear
By that which wraps it, moving thus with it;

And in like manner did this first of souls
Cause through its covering to appear to me
How gladly for my pleasure it had come.
Then it breathed forth: "Without thy proffering,
Do I discern thy will better than thou
Dost whatsoever is most sure to thee;
For I behold it in the truthful Glass,
Which makes Itself reflection of all else,
While Its reflection naught can make itself.
Thou wouldst fain know how long it is since God
Within the lofty garden placed me, where
This Lady for a stair so high prepared thee,
And for how long it was my eyes' delight,
And of the great displeasure the true cause,
And of the idiom that I used and made.
Now, not the tasting of the tree, my son,
Caused by itself so great an exile, but
Only the overstepping of the bound.
There, whence thy Lady caused Virgil to go,
I longed for this assembly while the sun
Four thousand times, three hundred times, and twice
Revolved; and I saw him return to all
The lights upon his path nine hundred times
And thirty while I was upon the earth.
The language that I spoke was all extinct
Long ere the people of Nimrod essayed
To do the work they could not consummate;
For no effect that comes from reasoning,—
Because of human pleasure, that is changed
Obeying heaven,—was ever permanent.
A work of nature is it man should speak;
But, so or so, nature permits you then
To do according as it pleases you.
Ere I descended to the pains of hell,

I was the name on earth of the Supreme Good,
Whence comes the gladness that envelops me;
El was It later called; and that must be,
For mortal custom is as foliage
On branch, that passes, and another comes.
Upon the Mount that highest rears itself
Above the wave was I, with sinless life
And sinful, from the first hour to that next
The sixth, when the sun's quadrant has been changed."

CANTO XXVII

"GLORY to Father, and to Son, and to
The Holy Ghost," began all Paradise,
So that I was inebriate with sweet song.
That which I saw appeared to me a smile
Of the universe; by hearing and by sight
Had my inebriation entered me.
O joy! O happiness ineffable!
O life of perfectness of love and peace!
O riches without longing and secure!
Before these eyes of mine four torches stood
Enkindled, and that one which first had come
Commenced to make itself a brighter flame;
And he became in outward semblance such
As Jupiter would be, if he and Mars
Were birds, and were their plumage interchanged.
The Providence, which makes assignment here
Of turn and office, had on every side
Imposed a silence on the blessed choir,
When I heard: "If I change my color, yet
Marvel thou not at it; for thou shalt see
All these change color, even while I speak.

He who usurps on earth my place, my place,
My place, that is without an occupant
Before the presence of the Son of God,
Has of my cemetery made a sewer
Of blood and filth, with which he, the perverse,
Who fell from here on high, down there is pleased."
Such color as from the sun opposite
At morning or at evening paints a cloud,
Saw I then all the heavens overspread;
And as a modest lady, who abides
Sure of herself, and at another's fault
When merely listened to, grows timorous,
So Beatrice changed semblance; and I think
That such eclipse there was in heaven at
The time of suffering of the Power Supreme.
And thereupon continuing his words
With such a voice transmuted from itself
That his appearance knew not greater change:
"The Bride of Christ was not on my blood nurtured
And not on that of Linus, nor on that
Of Cletus to be used for gain of gold;
But for the winning of this happy life
Did Sixtus, Pius, Calixtus, Urban shed
Their blood, when they had wept so many tears.
It was not our intention that a part
Of the Christian people should sit on the right
Of our successors, part upon the left;
Nor that the keys, which had been granted me,
Become an emblem on a standard borne
In combat against those who were baptized,
Nor that I be a figure on a seal
To venal and mendacious privileges,
At which I often redden and flash forth.
In shepherd's clothing ravening wolves are seen

From here on high through all the pastures; oh!
Defence of God, why art thou still asleep?
They of Cahors and Gascony prepare
To drink our blood. O thou begun so well,
To what vile end is it needful that thou fall?
But the high Providence, which saved for Rome
The glory of the world through Scipio,
Will succor speedily, as I conceive.
And then, my son, who for thy mortal weight
Shalt yet return below, open thy mouth,
Conceal not that which I do not conceal."
Even as our air the frozen vapors sends
Downward in flakes, when the Goat's horn in heaven
Is touched by the sun, in such a way saw I
Upward the ether beautify itself,
And those triumphant vapors send in flakes,
Which had been making sojourn there with us.
My sight was following their semblances,
And followed, till the interval so vast
Deprived it of proceeding further on.
Whereon my Lady, who observed me freed
From gazing upward, said to me: "Cast down
Thy sight, and see how fast thou hast revolved."
Since that hour when I had looked down before
I saw that I had moved through all the arc,
Which the first climate makes from middle to end;
So beyond Cadiz I could see the mad
Track of Ulysses; and, that side, almost
The shore on which Europa made herself
A burden sweet; more of this threshing-floor
Were bared to me, save that the sun advanced
Beneath my feet, a sign and more removed.
My mind enamoured, fondly following
My Lady ever, far more than before

Was ardent to lead back my eyes to her.
If nature or if art has made a lure
To catch the eyes, so that the mind be held,
In human flesh or in its pictured forms,
They all united would seem naught beside
The joy divine reflected upon me
When I had turned me to her smiling face.
The virtue which her look vouchsafed to me
From the fair nest of Leda parted me,
And to the swiftest heaven thrust me on.
Its parts most full of life and lofty are
So uniform that I can not assert
Which Beatrice selected for my place.
But she who saw my longing thus began,
Smiling with so much happiness, that God
Appeared rejoicing in her countenance:
"The nature of the world which holds at rest
The centre, and around it moves all else,
Commences here as with a starting-point.
This heaven has no place of being but
The Mind Divine, in which take fire the love
That turns it and the virtue that it showers.
Encircling light and love encompass it,
As it the others, and that envelope
He who envelops it alone controls.
No other motion marks for it its own,
But all the rest are measured by this one,
Even as ten is by its half and fifth.
And how time has its roots in such a vase
And in the others has its foliage
Henceforth is clearly manifest to thee.
O covetousness, that dost so submerge
Mortals beneath thee, that no one has power
To draw away his sight from out thy waves!

The will, indeed, comes to a blossoming
  In men, but then the never-ceasing rain
  Converts the true plums into blighted fruit.
Only in little children is faith found
  And innocence; afterwards each of these,
  Before the cheeks are covered, takes its flight.
While he still prattles, such a one will fast,
  As later, when his tongue is loosed, devours
  Whatever food under whatever moon;
Another, prattling, loves and listens to
  His mother, and when he speaks perfectly
  Will then desire to see her burial.
Even so the skin, at the first aspect white,
  Makes itself black of the fair child of him,
  Who brings the morning and the evening leaves.
Do thou, lest thou shouldst deem it strange, reflect
  That there is no one governing on earth;
  The human family goes, then, astray.
But before January wholly goes
  From winter, by that hundredth part down there
  Neglected, these supernal spheres shall roar
In such wise that the long-awaited storm
  Shall turn the sterns to where the prows are now,
  So that the fleet shall run its course aright;
And a true fruit shall follow on the flower."

CANTO XXVIII

When she, by whom my mind is lifted up
  To Paradise, had thus laid bare the truth
  Against the wretched mortals' present life;
Like him who in a mirror sees the flame
  Of an enkindled torch behind him ere

He have it in his sight or in his thought,
And turns about to see if so the glass
Tell him the truth, and sees that it accords
With that, as music with the verse's rhythm:
Even so my memory calls up again
What I did then, gazing in her fair eyes,
Wherewith Love made the cord to capture me.
And as I turned about and mine were touched
By that which is apparent in that heaven
When one looks truly on it as it whirls,
I saw a Point, that radiated light
So keenly, that the sight on which it burns
Must close, because of its intensity;
And whate'er star seems smallest seen from here
Would seem a moon if it were placed by that,
As one star by another has its place.
Perchance as closely as a halo seems
To engird the light that paints it, when the cloud
Of vapor bearing it is densest, thus
Apart, around the Point a circling fire
Revolved so rapidly as to surpass
The swiftest motion that engirds the world;
And this was by another girdled round,
That by a third, the third one by a fourth,
The fourth by the fifth, and that next by the sixth,
Thereon the seventh followed, now spread out
To such a width, that Juno's messenger
Entire were narrow to encompass it;
So, too, the eighth and ninth; and each of these
More slowly moved, according as it was
In number farther off from unity.
And that one had the clearest flame of all,
Whose place from the Pure Spark was least remote,
Because, I think, it shares most in Its truth.

My Lady, who saw me in great suspense
  In my anxiety, said: "On that Point
  Does Heaven and all nature, too, depend.
Look on that circle most conjoined to It,
  And know that in its motion it is so swift
  Because of burning love that spurs it on."
And I to her: "Were the world ordered so
  As I behold those wheels, then what is now
  Set forth to me had satisfied my mind;
But in the world of sense it may be seen,
  The heavens are so much the more divine
  As they are from the centre more remote.
So, if my longing is to have an end
  Within this marvelous, angelic temple,
  Which has for confines only love and light,
Why the example and the exemplar go
  Not in one manner I still need to hear;
  For I contemplate this in vain alone."
"If insufficient for a knot like this
  Thy fingers prove, it is not marvelous,
  So hard has it become through not being tried."
My Lady thus; afterwards saying: "Take
  What I shall say, if thou wouldst satisfy
  Thyself, and on it use thy subtlety.
The spheres corporeal wide and narrow are
  According to the virtue more or less
  That is extended throughout all their parts.
The greater goodness will work greater weal,
  The greater body for greater weal empowered,
  If in its parts dwells fulness equally.
Hence this one, that sweeps with it onward all
  The universe remaining, corresponds
  To the circle that loves most and that most knows.
Wherefore, if thou wilt cast thy measure round

The virtue, not the form of Substances
That now appear as circles to thy sight,
Thou shalt see wonderful conformity,
Of more with greater, and with lesser, less,
In each of the heavens to its Intelligence."
Even as remains resplendent and serene
The hemisphere of the air, when Boreas
Has from that cheek, whence he is mildest, blown,
So that the mist that clouded it before
Is cleared away, dissolved, and heaven smiles
On us with beauties of its every part;
So I became when I was furnished with
The clear response my Lady made to me,
And like a star in heaven the truth was seen.
And afterwards when she had ceased to speak
Not otherwise does iron throw out sparks
When it is molten, than the circles sparkled;
And every spark kept following their blaze;
So many that their number thousanded
More than the doubling of the squares of chess.
I heard Hosanna sung from choir to choir
To the fixed Point, which holds them to the place,
And ever shall, in which they e'er have been.
And she, who saw the doubting thoughts within
My mind, said: "The first circles to thy sight
Have shown the Seraphim and Cherubim.
So swiftly follow they their bonds to make
Themselves like to the Point as most they can;
They can in the measure of their sight sublime.
Those other loves that round about them go,
Thrones of the sight of God are called, because
Of the first triad they were set as bounds.
And thou shouldst know that the delight of all
Is as their vision's fathoming of truth,

Wherein the intellect of all finds rest.
By this is to be seen how blessedness
Is founded on the act which sees, and not
On that which loves, which follows afterwards;
And of this sight the measure is desert,
Which is brought forth by grace and by good will;
And such is the advance from grade to grade.
The following triad, which likewise puts forth
In this eternal spring-time bud and leaf,
Which no nocturnal Aries despoils,
Perpetually do Hosanna sing
With triple melodies that sound in three
Orders of joy, wherewith they are three-fold.
This hierarchy three Divinities
Compose: first, Dominations, next
Virtues, and third, the order of the Powers.
Then, in two dances, Principalities
Revolve, and the Archangels next the last;
And last of all, the Angelic hosts in joy.
All of these orders fix their gaze on high,
And downward exercise such influence
That all are drawn, and, too, all draw toward God.
And Dionysius with such desire
Applied himself to contemplate these orders,
Distinguishing their names as I have done.
But later Gregory parted from him;
Wherefore, as soon as he with opened eyes
Was in this heaven, at himself he smiled.
I would not have thee wonder, if on earth
A mortal have proclaimed such secret truth;
For he disclosed it to him, who had seen
On high much of these circles' truth besides."

CANTO XXIX

When, covered by the Ram and by the Scales,
Both children of Latona make a zone
Of the horizon at one time, as long
As from the zenith's instant balancing
Till both, departing from that girdle, break
The equipoise, changing their hemispheres,
So long, a smile depicted on her face,
Did Beatrice keep silence as she watched
The Point that had o'ercome me, fixedly.
Then she began: "I tell, I do not ask,
What thou wouldst hear, for I have seen it there
Where every Where and every When are centred.
Not for the acquisition to Himself
Of good,—which is not possible,—but that
His Splendor might, resplendent, say: I AM;
In His eternity outside of time,
Outside of all bounds else, as pleased Himself,
The Eternal Love in new loves showed Himself.
Nor did He lie before as if inert;
For not before nor afterwards went on
The moving o'er the waters' face by God.
Since form and matter, joined and simple, went
Forth into being that has no defect,
Like to three arrows from a three-stringed bow;
And as in glass, amber or crystal shines
A ray in such wise that from its approach
To its completeness no time intervenes;
So the triform effect of Him, its Lord,
Rayed into being all at once, complete,
Without distinction in its issuance.
Order was concreated and was fixed

For substances; and those, in which pure act
Was brought forth, were the summit of the world;
Pure power of action held the lowest part;
Midway this potentiality was bound
With act by such a bond as ne'er unbinds.
Jerome wrote for you how the angels were
Created a long tract of centuries
Ere the remaining universe was made;
But by the writers of the Holy Spirit
This truth is written in many passages,
And thou wilt note it, if thou give good heed;
And, too, the reason sees somewhat of it,
Which could not grant the movers should exist
So long and not effect their perfect work.
Now knowest thou where created were these loves,
And when, and how; so that extinguished now
In thy desire already are three flames.
Nor could one come in counting to a score
As quickly as of the Angel host a part
Disturbed the lowest of your elements.
The rest remained; and it began that art
Which thou beholdest, with so great delight
That never from their circling do they cease.
And the beginning of the fall was that
Accursed haughtiness of him, whom thou
Hast seen with all the weights of the world compressed.
Those whom thou seest here in lowliness
Confessed themselves as from that Goodness sprung,
Which had made them for so great knowledge apt;
Hence was their vision lifted up by grace
Illuminating and their merit so
That they possess a full and steadfast will.
I would not have thee doubtful, but assured,
To receive grace is meritorious

As the affection opens unto it.
Henceforth, if my words have been gathered in, 67
Regarding this consistory thou mayst
Contemplate much, needing no other aid.
But since men teach through your schools on the earth 70
That such is the angelic nature that
It understands, and recollects, and wills,
I will speak further so that thou mayst see 73
In purity the truth, down there confused
Through their equivocation as they teach.
Since they were gladdened by the face of God, 76
These Substances have never turned aside
Their sight from it, from which is nothing hid;
So have not vision that may be cut off 79
By a new object; hence there is no need
By a divided concept to recall.
So that down there men dream when not asleep, 82
Believing and believing not truth told,
But in the one is more fault and more shame.
Ye go not onward by one path below, 85
Philosophizing; fondness for display
And thinking thereupon transport you so.
And yet this, here on high, is borne with less 88
Of indignation than when men reject,
Or when they wrest, the written Word of God.
They think not there what is the cost of blood 91
To sow it in the world, and how he pleases
Who keeps close by it in humility.
To make display strives every one, and makes 94
His own inventions, and these are the themes
Of preachers, and the Gospel is not heard.
One says that at Christ's passion, turning back, 97
The moon had interposed herself, and thus
The light was not cast downward from the sun;

Another, that the light hid of itself;
  Hence to the Spaniards and the Indians,
  As to the Jews, such an eclipse was true.
Florence has not so many Lapi and Bindi
  As fables like to these, that the year through
  Are cried out from the pulpits on all sides;
So that the poor sheep, who are ignorant,
  Return from pasture fed upon the wind;
  But not to see the harm absolves them not.
Christ did not say to His first company:
  'Go and preach idle tales unto the world,'
  But gave them a foundation that was true;
And this alone was uttered by their mouths,
  So that to fight for kindling of the faith
  They made the Gospel to be shield and lance.
Now they go forth with jests and clownishness
  To preach, and only that the laugh be good,
  The cowl puffs out, and more is not required;
But such a bird is nesting in the hood,
  That, if the people saw it, they would see
  In what a pardoning they have confidence;
Wherefore has folly grown so great on earth
  That without proof of any evidence,
  At any promise made would men collect.
Saint Anthony fattens his pig on this,
  And others also who are far more pigs,
  Paying with money that has not the stamp.
But as we have digressed enough, turn back
  Thine eyes forthwith toward the straight highway,
  So that the path be shortened with the time.
This nature mounts up so excessively
  In number that there never yet was speech
  Nor mortal concept that could go so far.
And if thou note that which has been revealed

By Daniel, thou wilt see that he hides
A fixèd number in his myriads.
The Primal Light irradiates it all
And is received in it by modes as many
As are the splendors with which It is paired;
Hence, as affection follows on the act
Conceiving, so the sweetness of love glows
Diversely in this nature and is warm.
Behold of the Eternal Goodness now
The height and breadth since It has made Itself
So many mirrors, in which it is broken,
One in Itself remaining, as before."

CANTO XXX

Distant six thousand miles perchance from us
Is glowing the sixth hour, and this world now
Bending its shadow toward the level bed,
When the mid-heaven, deep to us, begins
To take on such a change that some one star
Loses its semblance at this depth below;
And as the brightest handmaid of the sun
Comes further on, so heaven shuts itself
From light to light even to that most fair;
Not otherwise the triumph which disports
Ever about the Point which vanquished me,
Seeming enclosed by that enclosed by It,
Little by little to my sight was quenched;
So that to turn my eyes to Beatrice
I was by seeing naught, and love, constrained.
If whate'er hitherto is said of her
Were all included in a single praise,
That praise were slight to fill the present need.

The beauty that I saw transcends the bounds
  Not only of ourselves, but I am sure
  Its Maker only can enjoy it all.
This pass has overcome me, I concede,
  More than did e'er the crisis of his theme
  Comic or tragic writer overwhelm;
For, as the sun to the most quivering sight,
  Even so the memory of that sweet smile
  Takes from my intellect its very self.
From the first day when in the life on earth
  I looked upon her face until this sight,
  Naught has cut off my song from following,
But now I am compelled to cease henceforth
  From following her beauty in my verse,
  As every artist at his uttermost.
She, of a quality that I resign
  To greater than my trumpet's heralding,
  Which leads its arduous matter to a close,
With act and utterance of a zealous guide
  Began again: "We have now issued from
  The greatest body, to pure light, this heaven;
Light intellectual and full of love,
  Love of true good and full of joy, a joy
  Transcending every sweetness. Here shalt thou
Behold the one and the other soldiery
  Of Paradise; one in the semblances
  That thou shalt look on at the Judgment Day."
Even as a sudden flash of lightning routs
  The spirits of the sight, so that it checks
  The strongest objects' action on the eye:
So round about me shone a vivid light,
  And left me swathed in its effulgency
  With such a veil, that naught appeared to me.
"Ever the Love which gives this heaven rest

With such a greeting welcomes to itself,
To make the candle fitted for its flame."
No sooner had these brief words come within
My being, than I understood that I
Was rising in excess of power of mine;
And with new vision I rekindled me,
So that no light has such intensity
That my eyes had not power to withstand.
And I beheld a river formed of light,
Glowing effulgently, between two banks
Painted with colors of a wondrous spring.
From such a stream were issuing living sparks,
And on all sides were settling on the flowers
That were as rubies compassed round with gold;
Then with the odors all inebriate
Would sink themselves within the marvelous flood,
And if one entered came another forth.
"The high desire that burns and urges thee
Now to have knowledge of what thou dost see,
Pleases me all the more, the more it swells;
But thou must needs drink of this water ere
So great a thirst be satisfied in thee."
Thus spoke she who was of my eyes the Sun;
Then said: "The river and the topazes
That enter and come forth, the smiling flowers,
Are of their truth but shaded prophecies;
Not that these things themselves are hard to know;
But there is a defect on thine own part,
That thou not yet hast such exalted sight."
There is no babe that springs so suddenly
With face toward the milk, if he awake
Much later than his wont, as I did then,
To make still better mirrors of my eyes,
By stooping toward the water that flows down

In order that man be perfected there.
And when the eaves of my eyelashes drank
Thereof, that moment it appeared to me
From a long form to have become a round.
Then like to those who have been under masks,
Who seem not as at first if they lay off
The form not theirs in which they disappeared;
Thus changed for me to greater festival
The flowers and the sparks, so that I saw
Both Courts of Heaven there made manifest.
O Splendor of God, by help of which I saw
The exalted triumph of the realm of truth,
Give me the power to tell how I saw!
A light is thereabove which visible
Makes the Creator to that creature's sight
Which has its peace only in seeing Him;
And it spreads out in figure circular
So far and wide, that its circumference
Would be too large a girdle for the sun.
Its whole appearance is a ray, that falls
Upon the summit of the First Moved Heaven,
Which thence receives its light and potency.
And as a hill in water at its base
Mirrors itself, as if to see itself
Adorned, when it is rich in green and flowers,
So mirrored, on more than a thousand seats
On every side above the light I saw
All those of us who had returned on high.
And if the lowest rank receives a light
So great within itself, how great the breadth
Of this rose in the outmost of its leaves!
My vision in the width and in the height
Lost not itself, but comprehended all
That joy in quantity and quality.

There near and far add not nor take away,
  For where God governs with immediate rule,
  The law of nature is not relevant.
Into the yellow of the eternal rose,
  Which spreads out, tier on tier, with redolence
  Of praise to the Sun that makes perpetual spring,
Did Beatrice draw me who was as one
  Silent and fain to speak, and said: "Behold
  Of the white robes how great the company!
Behold our city's circuit, oh, how vast!
  Behold our benches now so full that few
  Are they who are henceforward lacking here.
On that great seat, above which is the crown
  Already placed, on which thine eyes are fixed,
  Ere thou shalt banquet at this wedding-feast,
Shall sit the soul, on earth imperial first,
  Of lofty Henry, who to Italy
  Shall come as leader ere she is prepared.
The blind cupidity bewitching you
  Has made you like the little child, who dies
  Of hungering and who drives away the nurse;
And one shall then be perfect in the court
  Divine, who openly or covertly
  Will not go on with him along one road;
But shall not long be then endured by God
  In the holy office, soon to be thrust down
  Where Simon Magus is for his deserts
And put him of Alagna lower still."

CANTO XXXI

In form then of a rose of gleaming white
  Was shown to me the sainted soldiery,
  Which in His blood Christ made to be His bride.

But the other host, which, flying, sees and sings
The glory of the One enamouring it,
And, too, the goodness which made it so great,
Even as a swarm of bees, that now will sink
Within the flowers, and now return to where
Their labor has become a savor sweet,
Into the great flower sank, which is adorned
With leaves so many, thence to rise again
To where their love eternally sojourns.
They had their faces all of living flame,
Their wings were golden, and the rest so white
That never snow attains to that degree.
When they went down within the flower from rank
To rank they gave that peace and ardor forth
Which they had gained as they had fanned their sides.
Nor did the interposing of so great
A flying plenitude between what was
Above it and the flower impede the sight
And splendor, for the light divine goes through
The world in measure of its worthiness,
And so, that naught can be an obstacle.
This realm, secure and full of joy, and thronged
With those of ancient and of recent time,
Had sight and love fixed wholly on one mark.
O Trinal Light, which in a single star
Dost sparkle on their sight, imparting thus
Thy peace, look down upon our tempest here!
If the barbarians, who come from parts
That are each day by Helice o'erspread,
Revolving with her son so fondly loved,
Were filled with stupefaction when they saw
Rome and her lofty works, when Lateran
Was sovereign above all mortal things,
I, who from human things to those divine,

From those of time unto eternity,
From Florence to a people just and sane,
Had come, what wonder must have filled me then!
Truly with that and with my joy I felt
Delight in hearing not and standing mute.
And even as a pilgrim who is pleased
With gazing in the temple of his vow,
And hopes that he may yet tell how it was,
So through the living light with wandering gaze
I cast my eyes about the ranks, now up,
Now downward, and now sweeping round again.
Faces I saw persuasive in their love,
Embellished by Another's light, and smiles
Their own, and acts with every grace adorned.
The form of Paradise in general
My look had now included as a whole
And on no single part yet fixed the sight;
And I was turning with rekindled wish
To seek my Lady's answer as to things
Concerning which my mind was in suspense.
One thing I meant, another answered me;
For thinking to see Beatrice, I saw
An aged man, as those in glory, robed.
His eyes and cheeks were overspread with joy
Benignant, and his mien affectionate,
Such as befits a father's tenderness.
And: "Where is she?" I uttered suddenly.
Whereon he said: "To terminate thy longing
Did Beatrice move me to leave my place;
To the third circle from the highest rank
If thou look up, thou mayst again see her
Upon the throne that she has merited."
Without replying I raised up my eyes,
And saw her as she made herself a crown,

Reflecting from herself the eternal rays.
From that place of the highest thundering
No eye of mortal is so far removed,
In whatsoever sea it deepest sinks,
As was my vision there from Beatrice;
But it was naught to me, her image so
Came down to me unblurred by aught between.
"O Lady, thou in whom my hope is strong,
And who for my salvation didst endure
To leave in hell the footsteps of thy feet;
Of things so many that my eyes have seen,
As through the power and goodness that are thine
I recognize the grace and virtue come.
From servitude to liberty hast thou
Led me, by all those paths, by all the modes
That thou hadst in thy power to this end.
What thou hast greatly wrought in me, protect,
So that my soul, which thou hast rendered whole,
Be from this body loosed well-pleasing thee."
Thus I had prayed; and she, so far away
As it appeared, smiled as she looked at me;
Thereon she turned to the Eternal Fount.
Then said to me the aged saint: "That thou
Mayst perfectly attain thy journey's end,
Whereunto prayer and holy love sent me,
Fly through this garden with thine eyes, for thus
To look upon it will prepare thy sight
For rising higher through the ray divine.
The Queen of Heaven, then, for whom I burn
Wholly with love, will grant us every grace,
For I am Bernard, faithful unto her."
Like him, who from Croatia, it may be,
Has come to look on our Veronica,
And, never sated with its ancient fame,

Says in his thought, as long as it is shown:
"My Lord Christ Jesus, very God, was then
Your countenance in fashion like to this?"
Even such was I, viewing the fervency
Of charity in him, who in this world
Through contemplation tasted of that peace.
"O son of grace, this state of happiness,"
Thus he began, "will not be known to thee
Keeping thy gaze but downward on this deep;
But view the circles, to the most remote,
Until thou see enthroned the Queen, of whom
This is the subject and devoted realm."
I raised my eyes, and as at morning-tide
The regions of the eastern sky surpass
In light that part in which the sun goes down,
So, as if rising from a valley up
To mountain height, my eyes beheld a part
On the utmost verge outglow all else around;
And as, where we await the chariot-pole
That Phaëthon guided ill, it brightest flames,
And on this side and that the light grows less,
Thus, vividly that peaceful oriflamme
Shone at the middle point, and on each side
In equal mode displayed a lessened flame.
And at that middle point with wings outspread
More than a thousand angels I beheld,
Diversely bright and skilled, make festival.
I saw there on their sports and on their songs
Smiling a beauty, that was happiness
Within the eyes of all the other saints.
And, if I had in utterance such wealth
As in imagining, I should not dare
To essay the least of her delightfulness.
Bernard, beholding that my eyes were fixed

Intently on the glow that glowed for him,
With such affection turned his eyes to her
As made my own to gaze more ardently. 142

CANTO XXXII

With his affection set on his delight,
That contemplator, glad, assumed the task
Of teacher, and began these holy words:
"The wound that Mary closed, anointing it, 4
That one, there at her feet, so beautiful,
Is she who opened it, and gave the thrust.
Below her, in the order that is made 7
By the third seats, sits Rachel, and along
With her is Beatrice, as thou mayst see.
Sarah, Rebecca, Judith, and the one, 10
Great-grandmother of him who sang, and said
In grief for sinning: *'Miserere mei,'*
Thou mayst behold thus downward, rank on rank 13
Arranged, as with the name of each I go
Downward throughout the rose from leaf to leaf;
And downward from the seventh row, even as 16
Down to itself, the Hebrew women follow,
Dividing all the tresses of the flower;
Because according to the look that faith 19
Cast upon Christ, these are the wall which serves
As separation of the sacred stairs.
On this side where the flower is mature 22
With all its leaves, are seen the seats of those
Who had a faith in Christ who was to come.
On the other side, where unfilled spaces break 25
The semicircles, is the place of those
Whose faces turned to Christ already come.
And as upon this side the glorious seat 28

Of Heaven's Lady and the other seats
Below it form so great a boundary,
So, opposite, the seat of the great John
Who, holy ever, endured the wilderness
And martyrdom, and then for two years Hell,
And, lower, thus allotted to divide
Are Francis, Benedict, and Augustine,
And others hither down from rank to rank.
Consider now the deep foresight of God,
For the one and the other aspect of the faith
Shall join to fill this garden equally;
And know that downward from the rank, which strikes
Midway across the two dividing lines,
They sit not there through merit of their own,
But through another's, on conditions fixed;
Because all these are spirits loosed from bonds
Before they had true powers to elect.
This by their faces and their voices too
Like children's canst thou clearly understand,
If thou but look and listen well to them.
Thou, doubting now, keepst silent in thy doubt;
But I will loose for thee the powerful bond
With which thy subtle thoughts are binding thee.
Within this kingdom's amplitude there is
No place for aught that is concerned with chance,
As, too, for sadness, thirst or hunger, none;
For by eternal law is whatsoe'er
Thou seest here established so that all
As ring to finger justly corresponds.
And for this reason this folk, hastened on
To true life, is not *sine causa* here
Among themselves more excellent and less.
The King, through whom this kingdom has repose
In such great love and in such great delight,

There is no will to dare for aught beside,
Creating all minds in His own glad sight,
Endows them as it pleases Him with grace
Diversely; and here let the fact suffice.
And this the Holy Scripture notes for you
Expressly and with clearness in those twins
That in their mother had their anger stirred.
So, following the color of the hair
Of grace like that, must needs the highest light
Be as their crown according to their worth.
So, only in first keenness differing,
They have been placed in stations different,
And not by recompense for practices.
To win salvation in the early times
Accordingly, along with innocence,
Merely the faith of parents was enough.
With the first ages afterwards complete,
Through circumcision it behoved the males
To gain the power for their innocent wings.
But, when the time of grace had supervened,
Without the baptism, perfect now, of Christ,
Such innocence was held back there below.
Look now upon the face which bears to Christ
The nearest likeness, for its brightness can
Alone prepare thee for beholding Christ."
And I beheld upon her raining down
So great a joy, borne in the holy minds
Created to fly through that altitude,
That whatsoever I had seen before
Bore me not up in so great wondering,
Nor showed to me such likeness unto God.
And that love, which had first descended there,
Before her presence had spread wide his wings,
Singing, "*Ave Maria, gratia plena.*"

The blessed court responded to the song
Divine on every side in such a wise
That every countenance grew more serene.
"O holy Father, who for me endurest
To be in this deep, leaving the sweet place
In which thou sittest by eternal lot,
Who is that angel, who looks with such joy
Into the eyes of her, who is our Queen,
And so enamoured that he seems of fire?"
Thus I sought out the teaching once again
Of him who grew through Mary beautiful,
As does the star of morning from the sun.
And he to me: "Such confidence and grace
As can be in an Angel and a soul
Are all in him, and we would have it so,
For he is that one who bore down the palm
To Mary when the Son of God was pleased
To take on Him the burden of our load.
But come now with thine eyes, and in this way
Of this most just and pious empire note
The great patricians as I speak of them.
Those two who there on high sit happiest,
For being nearest to the Empress placed,
Are of this rose two roots, as one may say.
He who upon the left is near to her
That Father is through whose most daring taste
The human race tastes so great bitterness.
Upon the right that Father of old time
Behold, of Holy Church, unto whom Christ
The keys entrusted of this lovely flower.
And he who had, before he came to die,
Seen all the grievous days of the fair Bride
That with the spear and with the nails was won,
Sits there beside him; at his other hand

That leader rests, 'neath whom the thankless folk
Lived upon manna, fickle and perverse.
Opposite Peter see where Anna sits,
So well contented, gazing on her child,
And sings *Hosanna* and moves not her eyes.
And seated opposite the eldest Sire
Lucia, at whose call thy Lady went,
When to rush headlong thou didst bend thy brow.
But as for thee the time of slumber flies,
Here we will stop,—as a wise tailor does,
Who makes the gown according to his cloth,—
And will direct our eyes to the First Love
That thou, looking toward Him, mayst penetrate
As far through His effulgence as thou canst.
But, lest perchance by moving wings of thine,
Thou shouldst go backward thinking to advance,
There is a need of grace obtained by prayer,
Of grace from her who can give aid to thee;
And with affection do thou follow me
So that thy heart depart not from my words."
And he began this holy orison.

CANTO XXXIII

"O VIRGIN MOTHER, daughter of thy Son,
Lowly, and higher than all creatures raised,
Term by eternal counsel fixed upon,
Thou art she who didst so ennoble man,
That even He who had created him
To be Himself his creature disdained not.
Within thy womb rekindled was the love,
By virtue of whose heat this flower thus
Is blossoming in the eternal peace.

Here thou art unto us a noon-day torch
  Of charity, and among mortal men
  Below, thou art a living fount of hope.
Lady, thou art so great and so prevailest,
  That who seeks grace without recourse to thee,
  Would have his wish fly upward without wings.
Thy loving-kindness succors not alone
  Him who is seeking it, but many times
  Freely anticipates the very prayer.
In thee is mercy, pity is in thee,
  In thee magnificence, whatever good
  Is in created being joins in thee.
Now this man, who has through the universe
  From nethermost abyss up to this place
  Beheld the lives of spirits one by one,
Supplicates thee, of grace, for power such
  That he may with his eyes lift himself up
  Higher toward the Final Blessedness.
And I, who ne'er for my own vision burned
  More than I do for his, put forth to thee
  All of my prayers, and pray they fall not short,
That with thy prayers thou wouldst disperse for him
  All clouds of his mortality, so that
  The Supreme Bliss may be revealed to him.
I pray thee, too, O Queen, who canst effect
  That which thou wilt, keep his affections sound
  After so great a vision has been his.
Let thy care stay his human impulses;
  Behold how Beatrice, and all the Blest
  Are for my prayers folding their hands to thee!"
The eyes that God both loves and venerates,
  Fixed upon him who prayed, displayed to us
  How dear to her are prayers of the devout.
Then turned they unto the Eternal Light,

To which, as it must be believed, no eye
So clear of any creature enters in.
And I, who to the end of all desires
Was drawing near, even as I should, perceived
The ardor of my longing come to end.
And Bernard made a sign to me, and smiled,
That my gaze should be upward; but I was
Already of myself such as he wished;
For more and more my sight, becoming pure,
Was entering the very radiance
Of the exalted Light, true in itself.
Thenceforward was my vision's pòwer increased
Beyond our speech, which fails at such a sight;
And fails the memory at such excess.
Such as he is, who in his dream beholds
And, following the dream, the passion stays
Imprinted, but naught else comes back to mind,
Even such am I, for utterly, as it were,
My vision ends, while for me yet distils
Within my heart the sweetness born of it.
Thus is the snow beneath the sun unsealed,
Thus, on the light leaves by the Sibyl written,
The oracles were lost before the wind.
O Light Supreme, which art so high upraised
Above our mortal thoughts, lend to my mind
A little of what Thou didst then appear,
And grant my tongue to have so much of power,
That it may leave to those who are to come
Of Glory that is Thine one single spark;
If it return somewhat to memory,
And in these verses sound a little forth,
More of Thy victory shall be conceived.
I think by the keenness of the living ray
Which I endured, that I had been undone,

If my eyes had been turned away from it.
And I remember that I was for this
The bolder to endure, so much that I
Conjoined my gaze with the Unbounded Power.
O Grace abundant, whereby I presumed
To fix my look through the Eternal Light
So long, that I consumed my sight thereon!
I saw within its depths enclosed all that,
Which in the universe is scattered leaves,
With love as in a single volume bound;
Substance and accidents and properties
Fused as it were together in such wise,
That what I speak of is one simple Light.
That I beheld the universal form
Of this knot I believe, because I feel
My joy expanding as I speak of this.
One single instant robs my memory more
Than five and twenty centuries from the emprise
When Argo's shadow left Neptune amazed.
So was my mind completely in suspense,
Fixedly gazing, motionless, intent,
And ever with its gazing more on fire.
And such before that Light does one become,
It is impossible one e'er consent
To turn away from it to view aught else;
Because the good, the object of the will,
Is all collected there; outside of it
That is defective which is perfect there.
Henceforth, briefer shall be my speech of that
Which I remember even, than a child's,
Who bathes his tongue still at his mother's breast.
Not that more than one single semblance was
Within the Living Light on which I gazed,
Which is forever such as it has been,

But through my sight which took on strength in me
  Looking thereon, one sole appearance seemed
  Transformed to me, as I myself was changed.
In the Exalted Light's profound and clear
  Subsistence there appeared to me three rounds
  Of colors three, and in dimension one;
One seemed reflected from the other as
  Iris from Iris, and the third seemed fire,
  That from the other twain breathes equally.
Oh, how far short is speech, and oh, how weak
  For my conception, which, to what I saw,
  Is such, to call it little is not meet.
O Light Eternal, that alone abidest
  Within Thyself, knowing alone Thyself,
  Self-known and knowing, lovest and dost smile!
That circle, which appeared to be in Thee
  As though conceived as a reflected light,
  After my eyes somewhat had viewed it round,
Within itself with color of its own
  Seemed to be painted with our image there;
  Wherefore my sight was wholly set on it.
As the geometer, who wholly sets
  Himself to square the circle, and finds not
  By thought the principle of which he is
In need, even such was I at this new sight.
  I would see how the image was conformed
  To the circle, and how there it had its place;
But my own wings were not for this; except
  That then my mind was smitten by a flash
  Of lightning, wherein what it longed for came.
To the high fantasy here power failed;
  But now was turning my desire and will,
  Like to a wheel that evenly is moved,
The Love that moves the sun and the other stars.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

LATIN IN THE DIVINE COMEDY

INFERNO:

I	70	sub Julio *at the time of Julius Caesar.*
XVIII	6	suo loco *in its due place.*
XXI	42	ita *yes.*
XXXIV	1	Vexilla regis prodeunt inferni *The banners of the King of Hell advance,* words adapted from the hymn, Vexilla Regis prodeunt; Fulget Crucis mysterium, *etc.,* written by Venantius Fortunatus (530-609).

PURGATORIO:

II	46	In exitu Israel de Egypto *When Israel went out of Egypt* (Psalm CXIV. 1).
III	37	quia medieval Latin for quod, and meaning scholastically *the fact that the thing is.*
V	24	Miserere *Have mercy* (Psalm LI. 1).
VII	83	Salve, Regina *Hail, Queen,* words beginning an antiphon in honor of the Virgin Mary, and forming part of the divine office.
VIII	13	Te lucis ante *Thee, before* [*the close*] *of light,* the beginning of the hymn, Te lucis ante terminum.
IX	140	Te Deum laudamus *We praise Thee, O God!*

X	40	Ave *Hail.*
	44	Ecce ancilla Dei *Behold the handmaid of the Lord* (Luke I. 38).
XII	110	Beati pauperes spiritu *Blessed are the poor in spirit* (Matt. V. 3).
XIII	29	Vinum non habent *They have no wine* (John II. 3).
XV	38	Beati misericordes *Blessed are the merciful* (Matt. V. 7).
XVI	19	Agnus Dei *The Lamb of God.*
XVII	68	Beati pacifici *Blessed are the peacemakers* (Matt. V. 9).
XIX	50	Qui lugent *They that mourn* (Matt. V. 4).
	73	Adhaesit pavimento anima mea *My soul cleaveth unto the dust* (Psalm CXIX. 25).
	99	Scias quod ego fui successor Petri *Know that I was a successor of Peter.*
	137	Neque nubent *They neither marry* (Matt. XXII. 30).
XX	136	Gloria in excelsis Deo *Glory to God in the highest* (Luke II. 14).
XXII	5-6	Beati . . . . sitiunt *Blessed are they which do thirst* (Matt. V. 6, in part).
XXIII	11	Labia mea, Domine *O Lord, [open thou] my lips* (Psalm LI. 15).
XXV	121	Summae Deus clementiae *God of clemency supreme,* words beginning a hymn attributed to St. Ambrose.
	128	Virum non cognosco *I know not a man* (Luke I. 34).
XXVII	8	Beati mundo corde *Blessed are the pure in heart* (Matt. V. 8).

XXVII 58 Venite, benedicti Patris mei *Come, ye blessed of my Father* (Matt. XXV. 34).

XXVIII 80 Delectasti *Thou hast made me glad* (Psalm XCII. 4).

XXIX 3 Beati, quorum tecta sunt peccata *Blessed are they whose sins are covered* (Psalm XXXII. 1, adapted).

XXX 11 Veni, sponsa, de Libano *Come* [*with me*] *from Lebanon, my spouse* (Song of Solomon IV. 8).

17 ad vocem tanti senis *at the voice of so great an elder.*

19 Benedictus, qui venis *Blessed art thou that comest* (Matt. XXI. 9, adapted).

21 Manibus o date lilia plenis *Oh, give lilies with full hands* (Aeneid VI. 884).

83 In te, Domine, speravi *In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust* (Psalm XXXI. 1).

84 pedes meos *my feet* (Psalm XXXI. 8).

XXXI 98 Asperges me *Purge me* (Psalm LI. 7).

XXXIII 1 Deus, venerunt gentes *O God, the heathen are come* (Psalm LXXIX. 1).

10-12 Modicum, et non videbitis me, Et iterum, Modicum, et vos videbitis me *A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me* (John XVI. 16).

PARADISO:

I 70 per verba *in words.*

III 121 Ave, Maria *Hail, Mary.*

IV 129 frustra *in vain.*

VII 1-3 Osanno, sanctus Deus Sabaoth,
Superillustrans claritate tua
Felices ignes horum malachoth!
Hosanna, holy God of Sabaoth,
Illumining exceedingly with light
From Thee the happy fires of these realms!

85 tota *wholly.*

XI 62 Et coram patre *And in presence of his father.*

XII 92 decimas qui sunt pauperum Dei *tithes belonging to the poor of God.*

XIII 98 necesse [*a*] *necessary* [*premise*].

99 necesse [*a*] *necessary* [*conclusion*].

100 si est dare primum motum esse *if prime motion can be said to be.*

XV 28-31 O sanguis meus, O superinfusa
Gratia Dei, sicut tibi, cui
Bis unquam coeli janua reclusa?
O blood of mine, O grace of God poured forth
Exceedingly! To whom, as unto thee
Was ever opened twice the gate of heaven?

XVIII 91 Diligite justitiam *Love righteousness.*

93 qui judicatis terram *ye that be judges of the earth* (Wisdom of Solomon I. 1).

XX 94 Regnum coelorum *The kingdom of Heaven* (Matt. XI. 12).

132 tota *in its entirety.*

XXIII 128 Regina coeli *O Queen of Heaven,* words beginning an antiphon in honor of the Virgin.

XXV 26 coram me *in my presence.*

98 Sperent in te *They will put their trust in thee* (Psalm IX. 10).

XXIX 12 ubi . . . . quando *where . . . . when.*

15 Subsisto *I AM.*

XXXII 12 Miserere mei *Have mercy upon me* (Psalm LI. 1).

59 sine causa *without cause.*

95 Ave, Maria, gratia plena *Hail, Mary, full of grace,* words in the divine office beginning the prayer to the Virgin, taken from Luke I. 28.

3 2044 021 021 050

THE BORROWER WILL BE CHARGED AN OVERDUE FEE IF THIS BOOK IS NOT RETURNED TO THE LIBRARY ON OR BEFORE THE LAST DATE STAMPED BELOW. NON-RECEIPT OF OVERDUE NOTICES DOES NOT EXEMPT THE BORROWER FROM OVERDUE FEES.

WIDENER

SEP 10 1993

BOOK DUE